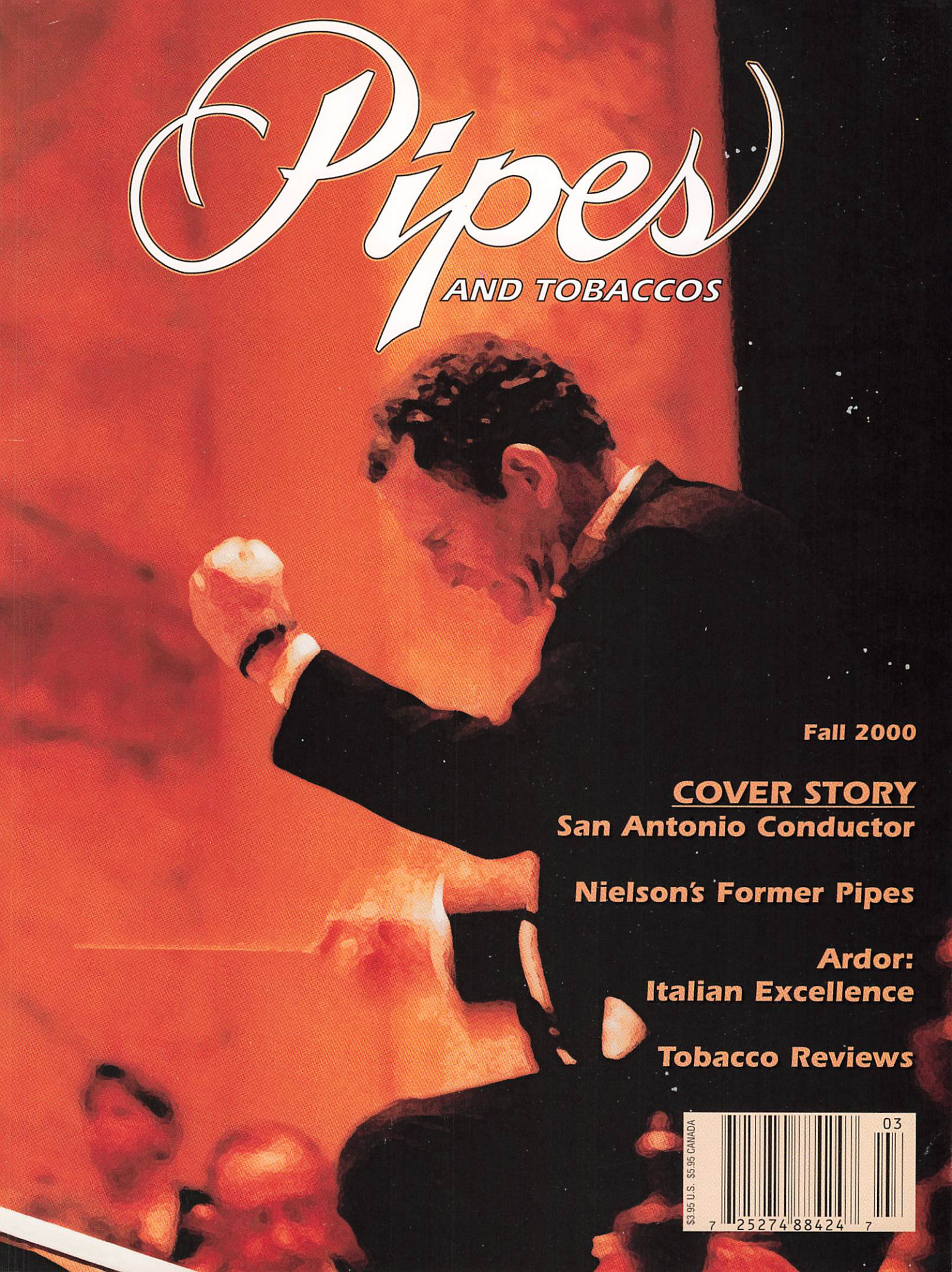
Pipes AND TOBACCOS



Fall 2000

COVER STORY
San Antonio Conductor

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Ardor: Italian Excellence

Tobacco Reviews

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Since 1898

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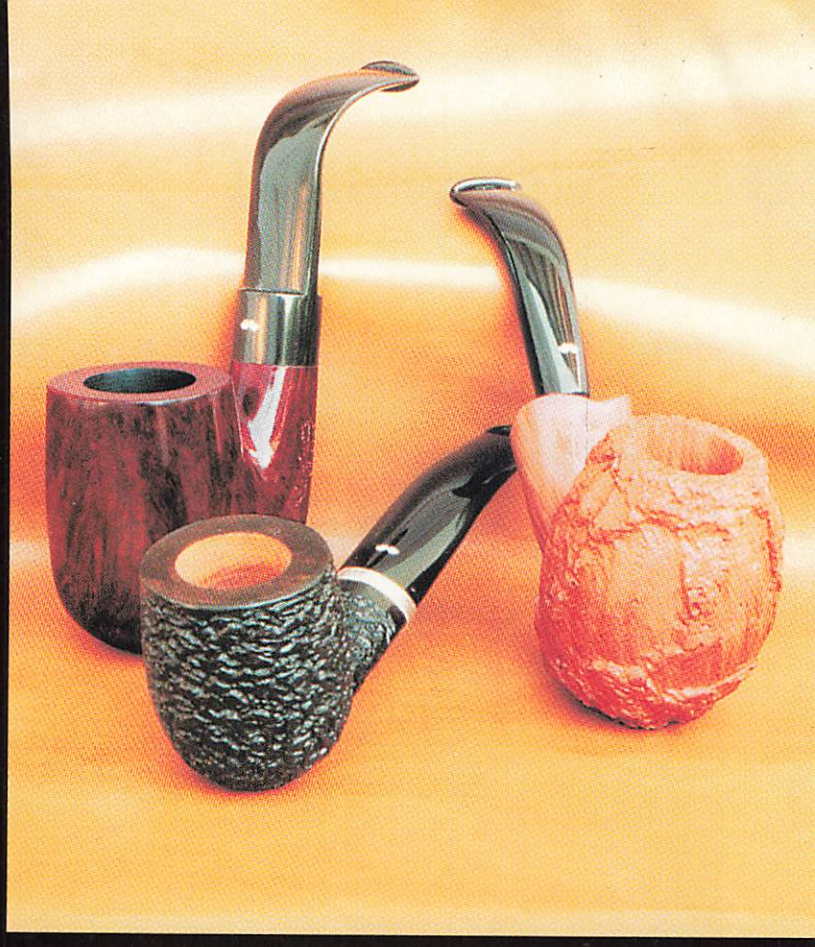

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Ferndowns are treated with their own blend of oils to give the pipe that extra special taste when you light your tobacco for the very first time.

Les Wood is not only famous for his classic handmade English pipes but he is also known for his skill and artisanship as a silversmith.

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La pipa del baffo

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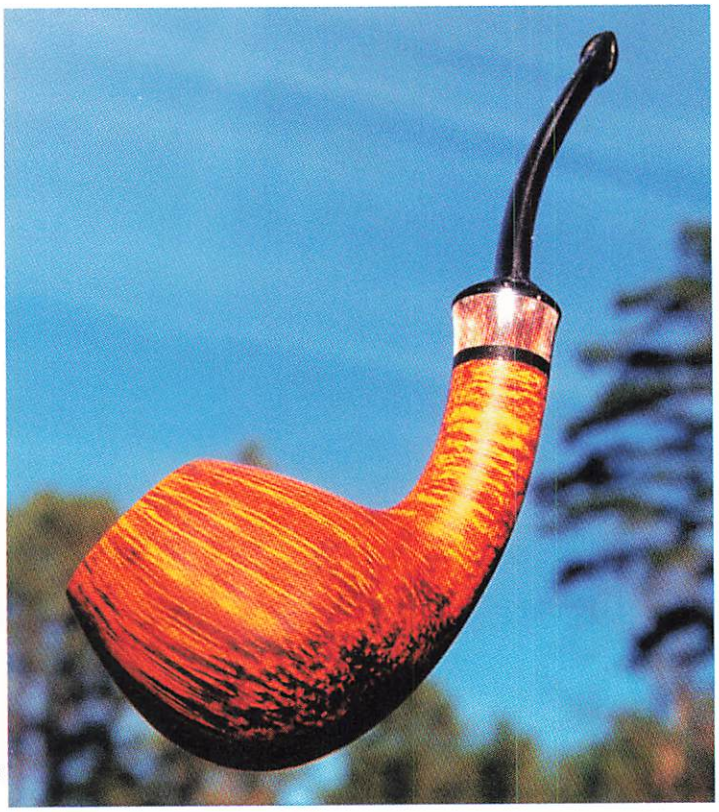
Pipes AND TOBACCOS



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16 **Curing**
Much has been said about the propriety of curing and aging briar before it is used for the manufacture of pipes. How complex is it to bring this natural material into a state that will provide the best pipes possible? What exactly is necessary to bring about those optimal conditions? Expert R.D. Field takes us through the steps in the curing process that your pipes experience long before you ever see them.

22 **San Antonio Conductor**
Creative personalities are common in our hobby, and often those creative energies turn to music. George Winters is an example of the success possible when determination and creativity meet. He overcame poor odds to achieve recognition as a world-class double bass player and, eventually, conductor of his own chamber orchestra. But he has not traveled alone; his pipes have been with him throughout his journey.

30 **Ardor**
Four generations of craftsmanship are represented in this Italian pipe company. The evolution has been long, but the final products are pipes of the highest standard. Known for their precision of engineering and unique stem design, Ardor pipes are sought after by sophisticated pipe smokers around the world.

42 **Former**
Don't let the name fool you; there is nothing about these pipes that isn't current, cutting edge and reaching into the future. Former is the nickname of Danish pipecarver Hans Nielsen. His pipes are beautiful, difficult to find, and are remarkable works of art with that distinctive Danish flair.

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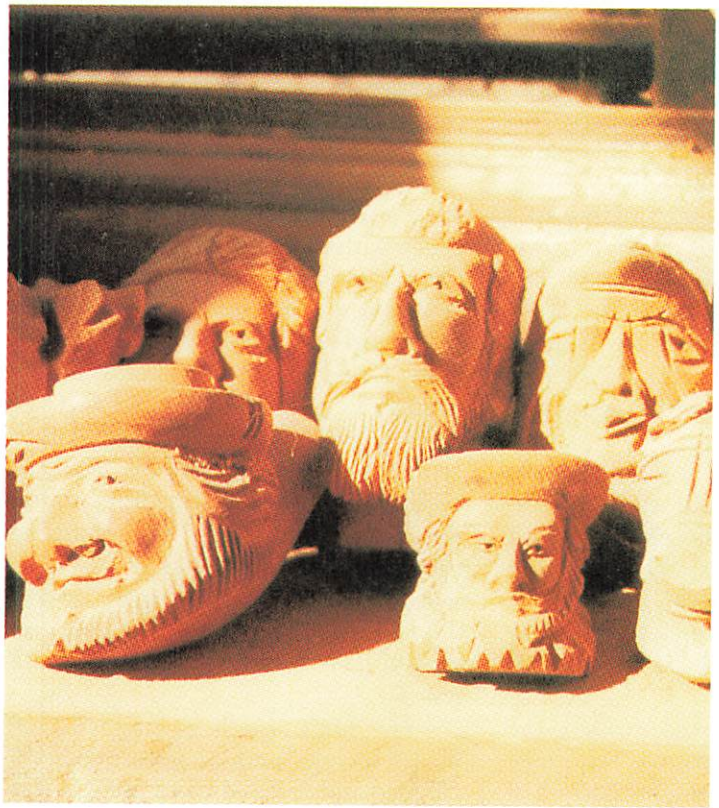
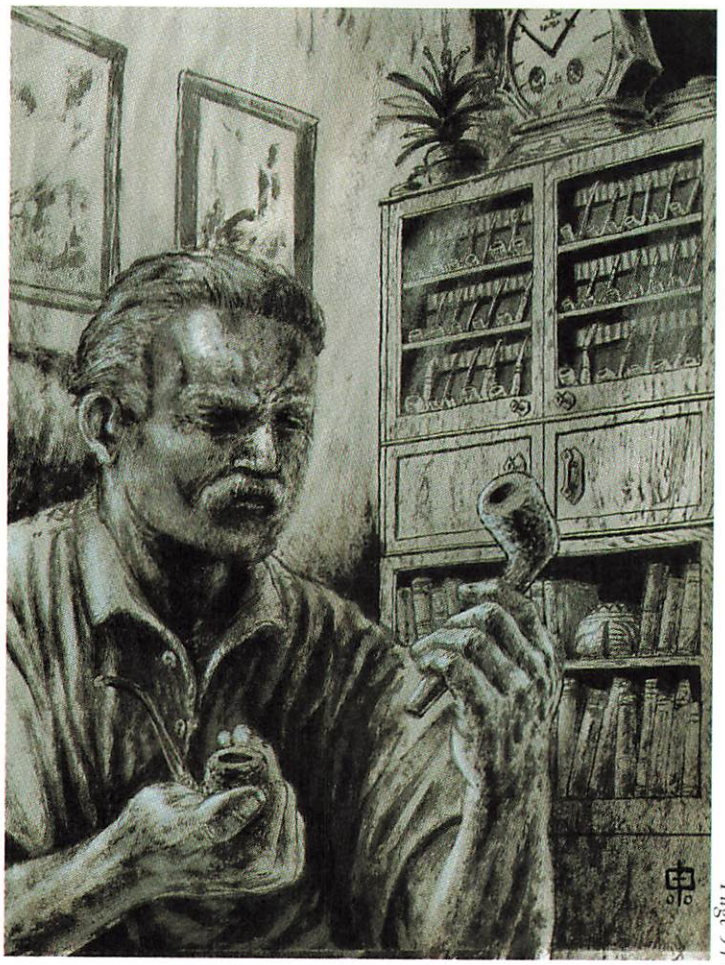
Fall 2000





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48 **Learned Craftsmanship**
Lawyer-turned-pipemaker Samuel Learned has quickly become recognized as one of the most creative carvers in the United States. When the legal profession became pedestrian for him, he turned his energies to carving briar pipes, and has produced some remarkable innovations in design. A natural fluidity and sweeping motion distinguishes his pipes, and when he joins briar with other materials, such as antler or bamboo, the results are stunning.

54 **One Chance in Ten**
What if there was a medical resource available that was not diametrically opposed to pipe smoking? To go a step further, what if there was actually a medical regimen that encouraged pipe smoking? Author Regis McCafferty explores such possibilities in this work of creative fiction.

Regular Features

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Cover

Conductor George Winters leading the Winters Chamber Orchestra in San Antonio, Texas

Pipes AND TOBACCOS

A quarterly magazine celebrating pipes of all kinds and fine tobaccos.

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First Pipe

The first time I put a pipe in my mouth I was five years old, and I was quite proud of myself. It was an early Sunday morning and the house was silent. My parents had had a party the night before, and I had floated into sleep among warm melodies of soft jazz, friendly voices and tinkling ice, and with the scent of pipe tobacco drifting lazily up the stairs to my room. It was a smell that always reassured me that my father was nearby, and I slept easily and deeply, enveloped in the shelter of that comforting aroma.

I was accustomed to rising before my parents. It was summer in upstate New York, and I would pour myself a bowl of Rice Krispies and eat on the porch swing, enjoying the clean breeze coming over the lake, watching the boats and wishing I could tie my own shoes.

However, as I passed through the living room this morning I noticed that remnants of last night's party had survived. The half-bowl of peanuts on the coffee table was a rare delicacy, far superior to cereal; grownups lived well.

Also on the table were several glasses, some still half full. I took a mouthful from one and immediately spat it back—watered-down, room-temperature scotch was not to my liking back then. Still, perhaps there were other treasures here.

Then I saw it lying in the ashtray: my father's pipe. I had been permitted brief, carefully supervised opportunities to handle his pipes in the past, but I'd never actually held one by myself. It felt important in my hand, a token of adulthood, power, confidence. It was half full of tobacco, and smelled terrible compared to the wonderful smoke that came from it when lit. I looked around, listened for signs of life from upstairs, and put it in my mouth.

I almost spat it into the same glass with the scotch, but caught myself. Tentatively, I tried it again. So this is what it is like to be grown up, I thought. What else is here? My father's sport coat lay over the back of the couch, his shoes were on the floor, and I looked hard at them.

When my parents came down the stairs a while later, I was sitting on the couch with that enormous tweed jacket thrown over my Howdy Doody pajamas, and my feet barely balancing my father's gigantic shoes on the coffee table. I held a scotch and water in one hand and a pipe in the other.

My mother gasped. My father grinned. They rushed to me, laughing uproariously. "You didn't drink any of this, did you?" asked my mother, taking the glass from me. "You know, son," said my father, "that's *my* pipe." But I didn't want to let it go. "Now that I am grown up," I said, "I need my *own* pipe."

He blinked, then laughed and picked me up, spinning me around. We laughed and laughed and I hugged him tightly.

That moment was special—among the finest we ever shared.

From there I grew into a difficult teenager and a headstrong adult. My father and I, while friendly, were not close friends. And then one day he died.

Sometimes, when my own house is quiet in the early morning, and I am awake before my family stirs, I fill and light a pipe in the silence and am transported to that Sunday morning, spinning happily with my small arms around my father's strong neck, the two of us laughing over my desire to be grown. The room blurs behind his face, his eyes reflect the image of the giggling child I was, and we love each other deeply and with uncluttered clarity.

My pipe brings me that moment again, and I smile.

Chuck

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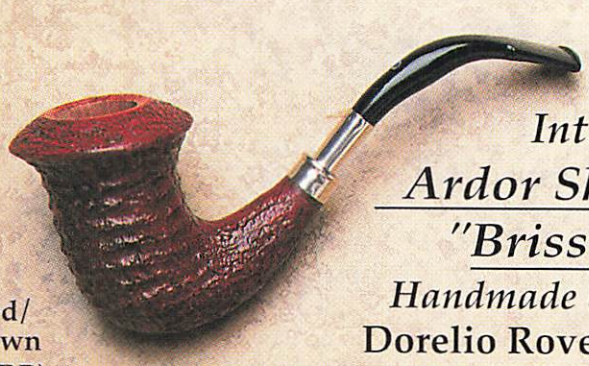
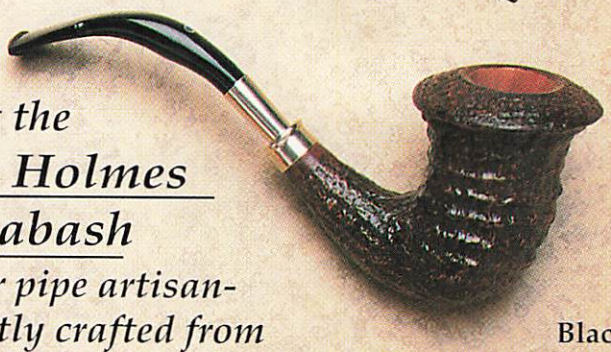


Red/
Brown
(CBRB)



Black
(CBB)

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Handmade by master pipe artisan- **Dorelio Rovera.** *Expertly crafted from 35 yr. old briar. This incredible pipe is named after world renowned Calabash collector & pipe aficionado,* **George Brissie.**

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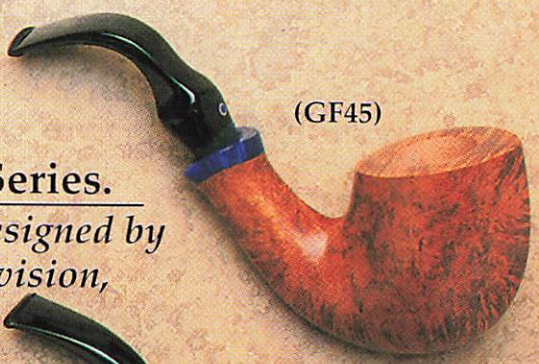
Tan
(CBT)

(MF111)



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P&T Readers Respond

Women Smokers

P&T is, thankfully, seeking input from females. Women are an important part of our hobby. You see us at pipe shows, pipe shops and local pipe clubs. We subscribe and contribute to pipe magazines and Internet pipe groups; we are even members of universal pipe smokers' coteries. We are also fiercely proud of our hobby, our rights as smokers and, of course, our favorite pipes. In lieu of a famous female pipe smoker to profile, I wish to mention how I, a 33-year-old woman, came to appreciate so deeply the world of pipes.

As a research consultant for a large pharmaceutical company during the 1990s, I traveled throughout Europe discussing various issues of research protocol with physicians and investigators. London was my most frequent stop and I grew to love the city and the friendly people I met there. One December, I had the pleasure of staying in the Reichenbach Suite of the Sherlock Holmes Hotel on Baker Street, across from the Sherlock Holmes museum. One morning, on the way to an important meeting, my colleague stopped the car at Astley's pipe shop on Picadilly Circus. The nerve! Wouldn't he be annoyed if I stopped at a perfumery? Once inside this small, historic shop, however, I had no choice but to gaze in amazement at the variety of well-crafted pipes packed tightly into large glass cases. Nonetheless, I was glad when we didn't arrive late to the meeting and I didn't give the pipe store a second thought. Somehow, though, something had changed. Suddenly I began to notice well-dressed executives puffing elegant billiards aristocratically as they walked purposefully down the streets; I watched for nearly 20 minutes two old-timers sitting on a bench by the Thames, one lighting his worn, long-stemmed Canadian every five minutes or so to take a single puff, the other keeping a bent apple lit with gentle, steady puffs as they talked passionately about something only they could hear; I saw a young professorial man rush by, his hands filled with books, his huge pipe sticking out of his mouth billowing smoke like a steam engine; I began to see a glimpse of a culture, an art, a history, and a social distinction I never knew existed; I began to notice the world of pipes. In brief, after perpetual indecision, and painful hesitation, I finally decided on a lovely medium-sized pipe, a marriage between a tra-

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ditional Dublin and an elegant clay, with the brown-tinted stem gently bent and the beautifully grained bowl tilted gracefully away—the friendly manager of Astley's told me how well it fit me. It was not a dramatic introduction to pipes, but it shows that a healthy dose of exposure, an open mind, and a crucial amount of time can benefit research subjects and research consultants alike! That evening, before leaving London, I sat by the fire in the Reichenbach Suite smoking my new Astley, reading about coal scuttles and Persian slippers, and musing that I may have stumbled upon something grand. Since then, each one of my pipes reflects an effort to locate the outstanding pipe shops in the cities I visit around the world. Thank you, fellow pipe smokers, for making this a more interesting and enjoyable world. Thank you again, *P&T*, for reaching out to the female segment of our hobby.

Jennifer Lindblad
Stockholm, Sweden

Doing Fine Work

Your magazine is not only great reading, but a virtual encyclopedia of pipes and tobaccos! From spring 1999 to your latest summer 2000 issue, you have done a splendid job in entertaining and informing us on the great pastime of pipe smoking.

Stephen Smith's article on Sasieni in spring of 1999 was of special interest, since it is my favorite smoking pipe ever made. I seek Sasieni unsmoked pre-transitionals at pipe shows, and usually find one every two years or so that I like. They don't stay unsmoked for more than an hour!

William Serad's article on Rattray's tobaccos echoed my opinions—that Rattray's is still one of the best tobacco lines in existence. Seven Reserve is my favorite daily smoke, with Red Rapparee, Old Gowrie and Hol O' the Wynd tied for second place. I hope my pipe comrades will give these blends a fair tasting in the future.

Stephen Richey
Centerville, Ohio

P&T: *Thanks for the kind words. We're glad you approve of the direction the magazine has taken. But we have to wonder about your specification of excellence in the issues after spring 1999...does that mean the 13 issues published previous to that weren't so good, or did you just start reading the magazine in 1999? Well, no matter; we'll do our best to keep the quality at the highest level possible.*

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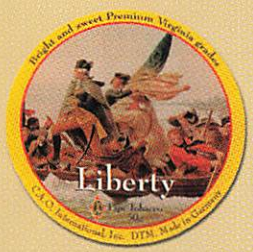
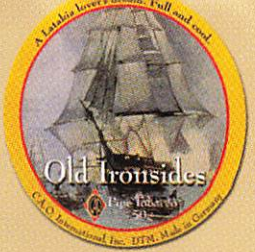
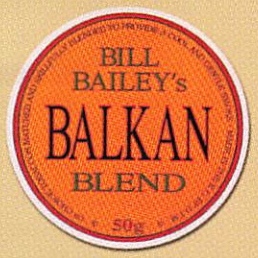
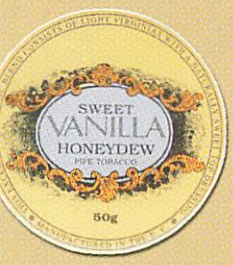




C.A.O.
Pipe Tobacco





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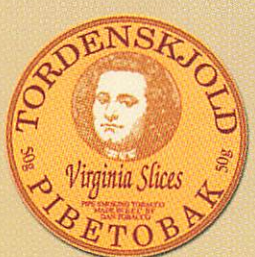
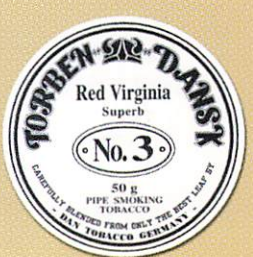


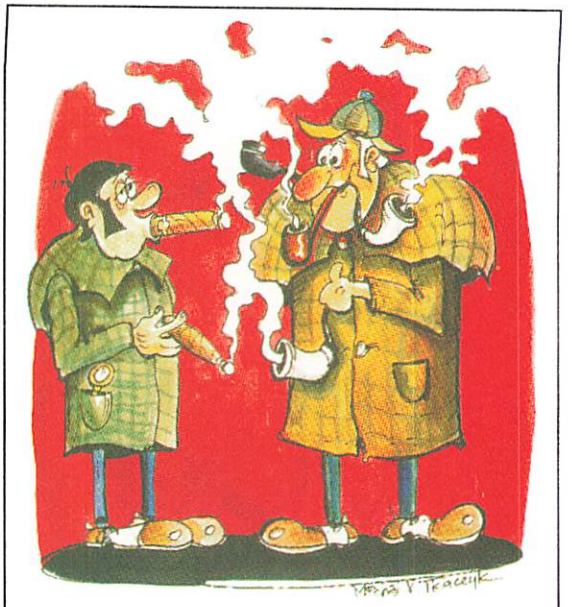


Charity Auction

Earlier this year, in an Internet newsgroup known as alt.smokers.pipes (affectionately known as "ASP") there was a post commenting upon the general lack of competition between two artisans, both of us tamper makers, specifically, Tatum's Workshop and Ming-Kahuna. Well, after a fellow ASPer suggested a seven-day set of tampers, we put our heads together and decided to create such a seven-day set of tampers, to be sold at auction, the proceeds to be donated to charity. As competition has never been an issue between Ming-Kahuna and Tatum's Workshop, as is the case with most artisans in the pipe world, what better way to demonstrate this fact than to collaborate on a joint effort. So, it was decided that a seven-day set of tampers would be a wonderful way to showcase our friendship while doing some fundraising for charity.

Then, after a little further brainstorming, we decided that the seven-day set (three tamps to be created by Tatum's Workshop, three to be created by Ming-Kahuna, and the seventh to be created by both) required another element: the finest tobaccos to be tamped by those tamps. The choice was obvious: the tobaccos of blend-meister Gregory L. Pease under the auspices of G.L. Pease Tobaccos. Gregory Pease has eagerly joined our endeavor, and his fine blends, creativity and energy have become an integral part of the auction.

Now, a bit about the auction. The seven-day set of tampers will consist of the finest craftsmanship from both Ming-Kahuna and Tatum's Workshop. Seven tampers will be presented along with a beautiful tamper rack. And, along with those tampers, the fabulous and most sought-after tobaccos of G.L. Pease Tobaccos. Those familiar with G.L. Pease Tobaccos know what a treat that this truly is. The tampers and tobaccos will be auctioned off on eBay, under the heading "Seven Day Tamper Set," thanks to the generous services donated by well-known pipe man and eBay seller Jeff Folloder, known on eBay as "straightgrain." The auction will commence on Oct. 1, 2000, and will run for seven days. The entire net proceeds of the sale will be donated to the American Red Cross—a most worthy cause.



Watson, our investigation concludes that the best articles on pipes and tobaccos can be found in Pipes and tobaccos *magazine...Case closed!*

In the month leading up to the auction, the auction items can be viewed at each of our respective Web sites and various other selected sites around the Web. Check out the Internet newsgroup *alt.smokers.pipes* for updates. We invite our fellow members of the Brotherhood of the Briar to bid on this unique auction, helping to help those in need.

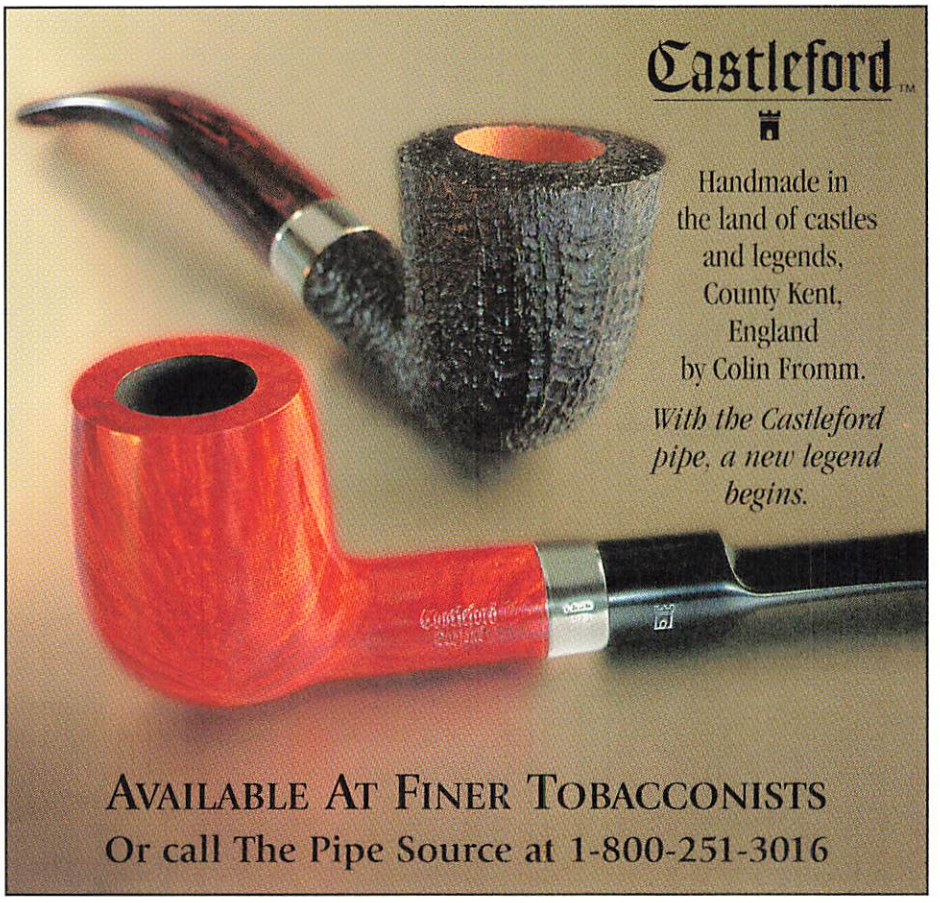
Paul Tatum
Tatum's Workshop

Art "Buzz" Ruppelt
Ming-Kahuna, Ltd.

Gregory L. Pease
G.L. Pease Tobaccos

Pipe Mud

I would like to tell you about the use of a simple and inexpensive solution for the problem of the high draft hole (a.k.a. air hole) in pipes. A high draft hole occurs when the drilling through the shank of a pipe meets the bowl or tobacco chamber at a point higher than its bottom. In other words, the draft hole and the bottom of the bowl do not meet flush. The result is that the bottom of the bowl does not



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Dear Valued Customers:

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Please write or fax or call us for a copy of this new, all-inclusive brochure. We will be happy to send it to you, along with two flyers that we have developed as pipe smoker's guides: (1) How to Smoke Flake Tobaccos and (2) Pipe Tobacco Blend Components and Their Flavor Characteristics.

Since 1977, we have worked very hard to bring to you, our customers, the finest pipe tobaccos available. We take great care from leaf to finished product, carefully aging the tobaccos before manufacturing, again in our cake-processing, and yet again for as much as one to two years in the tins.

McClelland does not sell directly to consumers but we will be happy to work with the pipe and tobacco shop of your choice to assure that you will always have ready access to the McClelland tobaccos you prefer. If your favorite retailer doesn't stock the particular McClelland blend you want, please ask for it. Call us at 1-888-213-8207 toll-free and we will do what we can from this end.

The 2000 version of the limited-edition Christmas Cheer will be available to the shops at the annual trade show in August, with shipping beginning in September. Other exciting developments are in the works as well and, when available, they will be announced in the pages of *pipes and tobaccos* magazine.

Sincerely,

Mary McNiel

Mary McNiel, president

P.O. Box 7005, Country Club Station, Kansas City MO 64113
Phone: (888) 213-8207 FAX: (816) 474-1666

properly cake. It gets wet and sometimes rank, and the pipe does not draw as well as it should.

I would like to offer an approach to this dilemma. I make no claims to this being the perfect solution but it does seem to work, and seems relatively harmless as well. It was jointly developed by myself and my friend Terry McLoughlin, who is now the manager at the Port Royal Cigar and Pipe shop in Toledo, Ohio.

Our solution is what we call "pipe mud," which is a mixture of fine cigar ash crushed into fine powder, and then mixed with water to produce a thick paste or "mud" that can fill in the bottom of the bowl of a pipe to meet the bottom of the draft hole. Because it is a nonsticky paste, pipe mud can be formed in any way the smoker wishes. The "spoon" of a pipe tool works well, but the best technique is to insert a pipe cleaner through the shank to make a groove or channel at the junction of the pipe mud's "false bottom" and the entrance of the draft hole. This simulates the actual conditions of proper drilling.

Pipe mud has several important advantages. When properly mixed it dries very hard, almost as hard as cake. It adds no flavor to tobacco, and is made of a completely inert, noncombustible material. It is very readily and easily caked over by the normal process of smoking, and it absorbs moisture, more so than briar itself. Another advantage is that it can be easily removed with a standard reaming tool if one decides to get rid of it. In addition to adjusting high draft holes, we used it to fix heat fissures in the inside of bowls for customers, and to fill in heat cracks around a draft hole that is starting to burn out. Another use for pipe mud has been for bowls or tobacco chambers with a "U" shaped bottom, that is, one that for some smokers does not allow tobacco to burn completely and, consequently, leaves too much dottle in the bottom of the bowl. In these cases, pipe mud can be used to reshape the bottom of the bowl, tapering it gently into the draft hole. I have improved several of my own pipes this way, although I should mention that I use this stuff very conservatively, only if and when there is a need. A final advantage of pipe mud is that it is cheap, costing no more than the enjoyment of a fine cigar or two.

The single most important point to remember about making pipe mud is that the cigar ash and water must be mixed properly or the entire effort will be wasted. If too much water is used in the mix, the pipe mud will easily crumble, flake away and disintegrate. The mixing should be thorough and complete. When mixing, as little water as possible should be used, so that there is no reflective sheen of the water showing on the surface of the mud. If too little water is used, the ash will separate and the mix will not become cohesive.

The ideal combination is to have so little water in the mix that any less will cause that separation. It takes just a bit of practice but eventually one gets the knack.

After creating the "false bottom" of the bowl, the pipe mud should be allowed two full days to dry, so that the water can evaporate and the pipe mud can harden and grab onto the walls of the bowl. The pipe can then be smoked and a new cake can be formed on the new surface.

I know that this approach will be controversial for some, but please bear in mind that pipe mud can be easily removed with a good pipe reamer. We have never had any negative consequences as a result of using it. I would welcome, in any case, comments, criticisms, suggestions for improvement, or better solutions to the problem of the high draft hole that remains, nevertheless, in need of attention.

Fred J. Hanna
Chesapeake Pipe Club
Baltimore, Maryland

Pipes and tobaccos Pipe Design Contest

Instead of our usual carving contest, we've decided to widen the field. This year's contest is for design, not completion, of a briar pipe. If you can draw, you can enter. Entries must be drawn to actual size on graph paper, and provide views of all six sides of the pipe: left, right, top, bottom, front and back. All measurements must be provided in the drawings, and your name should appear on the back of each page. No bells and whistles will be considered—no silver bands, windcaps, special mounts or odd materials—just briar and mouthpiece in the design, please. Your design should work equally well as either a smooth or a carved pipe—grain is not a factor. Internal engineering, unless unusual, need not be diagramed. Any shape pipe is acceptable, but don't get too outlandish, as it must be clear that the smoking quality of the pipe will be excellent.

One entry per person will be accepted, postmarked no later than Sept. 15, 2000 (that's a one-month extension), and sent to "Pipe Contest," 3000 Highwoods Blvd., Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604-1029. Drawings cannot be returned. Neatness counts; unclear drawings will be disqualified. Send a self-addressed stamped postcard if you would like acknowledgement of receipt. All entries will be assessed in our office, and the best 20 entries will be forwarded to the final judge: Michael Butera.

Mike Butera has won too many awards to list here; he is among the finest pipemakers in the world. You may recognize Butera's name from his lines of cigars and pipe tobaccos. He is also responsible for bringing into the U.S. one of the most popular brands of pipe tobacco available: Esoterica. His pipes are vigilantly sought by collectors; they fetch astonishing prices on those rare occasions when one becomes available.

But most important for this contest, Butera is an unparalleled pipe craftsman. And if you win this contest, he will personally hand-make the pipe that you have designed; then we will photograph it and forward your pipe to you. One prize will be awarded. How would you like to own a Butera-made pipe from your own design? Here's your opportunity. Grab a pencil and get to work.

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P&T: *Thank you for that interesting solution. It is sure to interest many of us who have a pesky pipe or two that might benefit from a more appropriately placed air hole. Perhaps we'll get reports from some of the do-it-yourselfers out there as they give this a try.*

J.R.R. Tolkein

I recently got out my set of Tolkien books and began re-reading them for the countless time. Once again while I lose myself in the incredible world of hobbits, elves, dwarves and wizards I am amazed at how pipes and tobacco are interwoven throughout the story. In fact, last year when my wife read through the books for the first time her one remark was that she now understood why I was fascinated by pipes. Perhaps she is more correct than she even knows, because I certainly can remember being an 11-year-old and reading about hobbits sharing their pipes around the table after dinner and picturing Gandalf's magical smoke rings as they chased each other around the room to land like a halo over the old man's head. Then of course there is the fact that every picture I have ever seen of J.R.R. Tolkien shows him with a curl of blue smoke rising from the pipe that seems to have been a permanent fixture to the man.

I guess what amazes me now is that so little has ever been said about Tolkien and pipes. I felt much the same way about Herman Melville until the spring edition of *P&T* satisfied a void in that literary part of my soul. So I ask you, what is there that is known about Tolkien's love of pipes both personally and in his books? I did get a response from the Tolkien Society saying that his son Christopher used to smoke Players Navy Cut and that tins of the same brand were used throughout the Tolkien household for storage. However, since I am unable to find much information about Players Navy Cut, I still am at a loss. Any fan of Tolkien knows that hobbits invented the art of smoking. I know it really is just my overactive imagination, but I would love to know what Tolkien had in mind when he wrote about what were widely regarded as the three best blends in Middle Earth, namely Old Toby, Longbottom Leaf and Southern Star. I'd love to try a bowl of one of those.

Bill Weatherford
Olathe, Kansas

P&T: *Players Navy Cut is something of a mystery, and we have been unable to find it among distribution lists for the U.S., though it is still available in Europe. However, a Navy Cut is a cut plug, usually all Virginia, and perhaps with rum (though probably not in this case). So it would probably be a flake or plug if you could find it. Navy-styled blends tend to be very heavy and dark.*

You may be pleased to learn that we have an article on J.R.R. Tolkien ready to publish, and you should be seeing it in our next issue. There is little information available about Tolkien's specific smoking preferences, but the story will still be of interest to all Tolkien fans. ***P&T***

Augusto Parascenzo, accepting an award of merit at the Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers pipe show in 1998.

Farewell

We are saddened to report the passing of a good friend, Augusto Parascenzo, who died in May after a 3-month illness following minor surgery. He is survived by his wife, Giusy; mother, Maria; son, Marco; and daughter, Sabrina.

For 50 years, Parascenzo was a respected member of the tobacco and pipe industry, inaugurating his tobacco shop, Novelli, in Rome in1951. Today that shop is a thriving stopping place for travelers passing through Rome, as well as residents seeking the finest in pipes and accessories. "Augusto's success really revolved around his enthusiasm and love for the trade," says Robert Hamlin, close friend and business associate of Parascenzo. "He became a friend to everyone who knew him. Those friendships were his most important possessions; business was just incidental."

The North American distributor of Castello Pipes, Parascenzo took enormous pride in the work he was able to do to bring greater numbers and higher grades of Castellos than ever before into the United States. Castello Pipe Company will recognize Parascenzo by producing a special pipe in his honor. His son, Marco, whose love for the industry matches his father's, will be continuing with his father's work by running the Rome retail shop and by maintaining the North American distribution of Castello pipes.

Please join us in mourning the loss of this fine gentleman and in celebrating his enormous contribution to our hobby.

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CURING

Another in an infrequent series of articles concerning the briar pipe

by R.D. Field

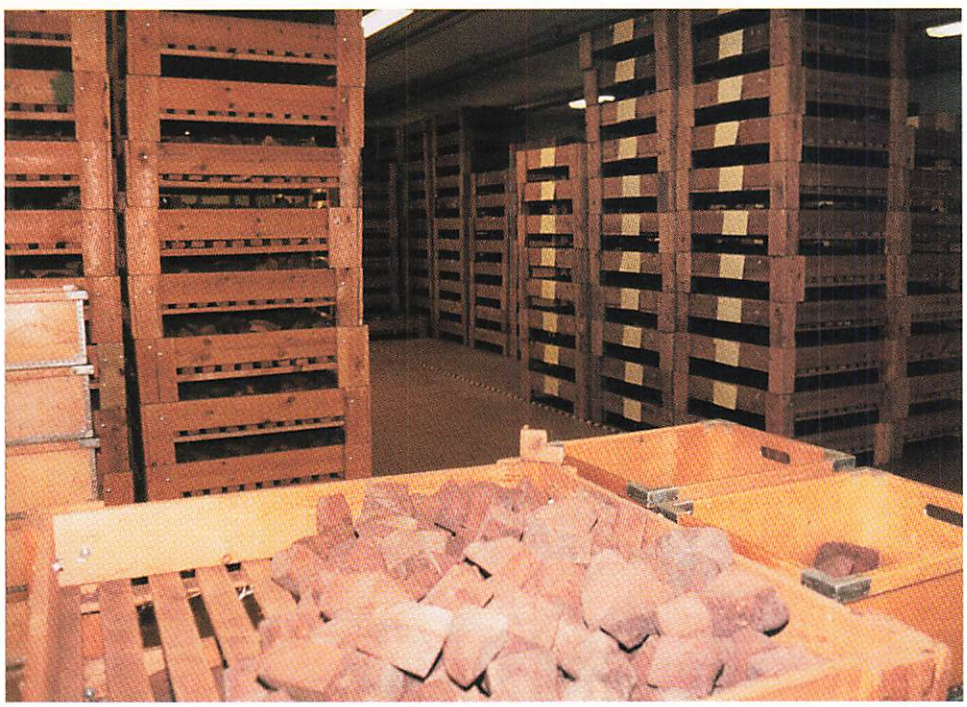
Curing sets briar pipes apart, one from the other. Both have been rather unwell, and one has been cured while the other has not.

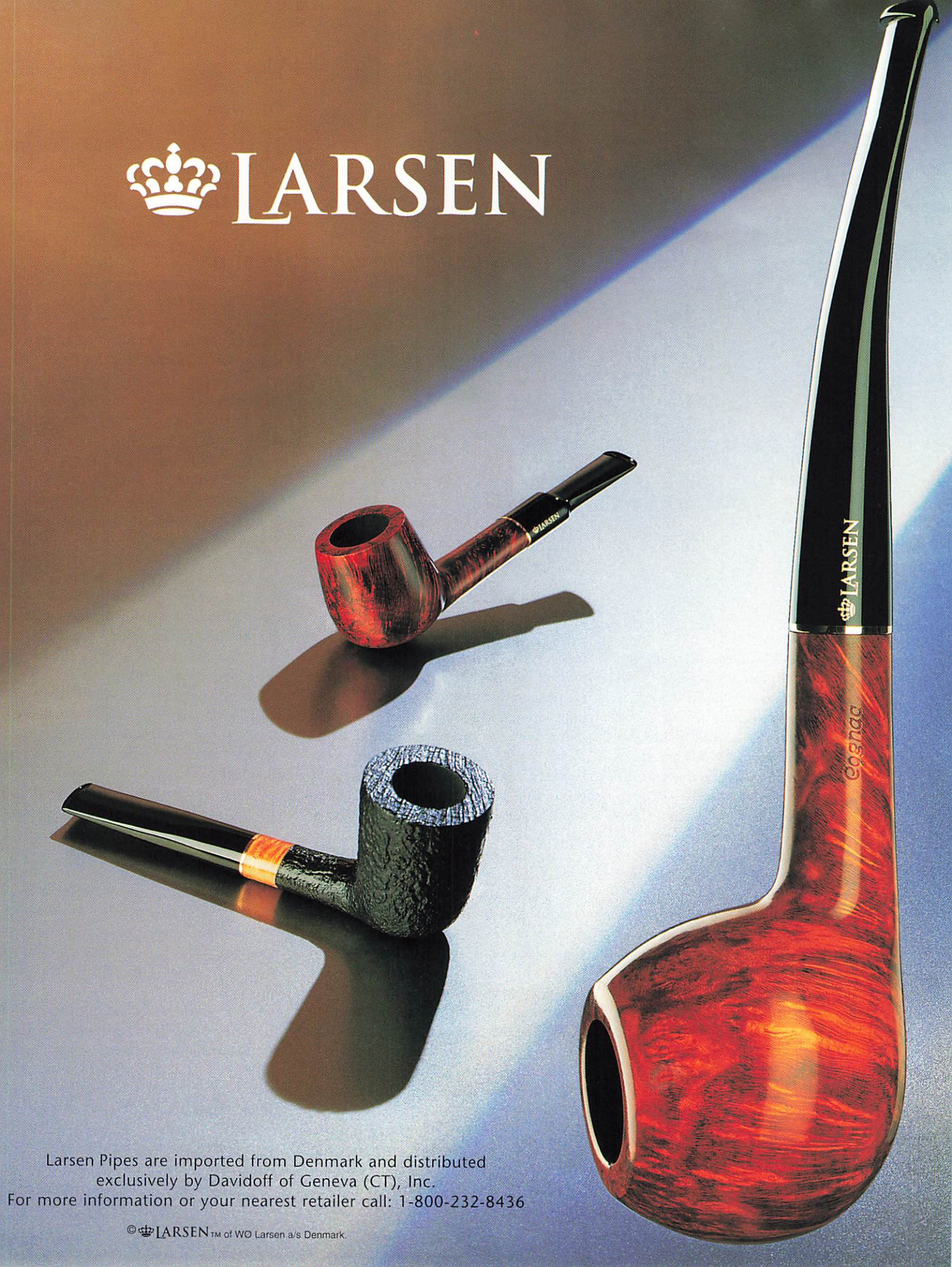
I'll explain. Briar comes from the soil—and a mean and nasty soil it is—where it has grown for many years before being uprooted by a man with a pick, shovel and cart.

Briar is a shrub, and varieties of this shrub grow throughout the world; there's even some from North Carolina that was tried for pipes while the war was on in the '40s. It wasn't any good though, because the soil it came from was *too* good, and it didn't develop the characteristics that were needed to hold fire. For that toughness the shrub needs to sort of undergo torture and struggle. Bad soil is what it needs, and a bad climate. Not bad cold but bad hot, and with very little water around. Under these conditions briar grows very, very slowly—sort of just inching along year by year. If it's not dug up too quickly—say give it 40 or 50 years at least—it can become useful. Some think that if the grain has tightened enough, and if it's placed in the right hands, it can become a useful smoking chimney. I personally don't think that's it. I think there's something else in the wood that leads to this special character, but I don't know what it is. That's up to the plant doctors to figure out.

Well, this wood has been in the ground a really long time, and there's all kind of stuff in the burl—that's the part growing below ground that is used to make pipes. It kind of looks like a ball with roots below and branches above. And there's all manner of things inside that ball. But before anyone can even think of making briar pipes from it, a lot has to be done. First the forester or woodsman or digger or whoever has to get that ball out of the ground in one piece with no injuries. Wouldn't do to have the end of a pickax rammed into the ball, exposing the inside to the elements before it can be brought to the briar sawmill. So the digger first has to find the shrub, which isn't hard because in the area he's working it's all over the place. Next he has to gauge the age of the shrub before he digs it; wouldn't do to dig up a little bitty burl. Not for pipes anyway. Might make a small ashtray or match holder is all. Then, if he feels he's got something to work with he sets to work. Cuts off the branches low as he can so the stumps are just above the soil. Digs around the burl with pickax and spade—slowly uncovering it. Hard, mean work. No one around to talk to. Maybe a radio. After that ball is uncovered, there are still roots underneath. Have to separate the burl from the roots with a saw and then put that heavy sucker into the cart. Or else just leave it and go on to another. Come back with the cart and donkey later. Did I mention that all these guys are old—60s and 70s. No kids want to work all day in the woods by themselves. Kids are in the towns working where the action is. Lonely job there in the woods; I guess you got to be sort of at peace with yourself to do it.

When the digger has enough burls, he takes them to the sawmill. Gets paid

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on the spot. Cash business. Now no one at this point knows what's in those burls, if the wood is good or not. So the pay is for weight—nothing else.

The folks at the sawmill gather up the newly harvested burls and pile them on top of one another so that there stands a small mountain of wood balls. And then they spray water on them to clean them and such. Now at this point the wood is still alive, and the sawmill folks have to kill it, but nicely, so it can be made into pipe bowls. So they put the burls into trenches, cover them with empty gunny sacks, and let them sit until they die—about three months time. You ought to smell the aroma of that wood in the trenches; there's a real tang in the air, a good clean tang that makes you feel good to be alive and to be in the countryside. Anyway, the wood takes a time to die. And if you take away some sacking to look at the burls, you'll see bright green shoots growing out of the wood. That wood is a fighter; it doesn't give up but tries to find new earth to bury itself in.

After the wood is dead, it's time for cutting. One part of the sawmill is composed of a great round building with a high ceiling. This is the cutting room. Several cutters, all old and experienced, sit around that room, each straddling a huge circular saw with teeth as big as my index finger. It takes courage just to sit there with the saw whirling away between your legs, let alone to cut anything. But the cutters know what they're about, or else they wouldn't be there—literally.

I'll tell you a little story about these cutters: they are so skilled at what they do that one of these guys, for my benefit, took a block and carved it into a small rocking chair on that huge circular saw. One piece of wood; no glue; no hand tools. I'm telling you that I could not believe my eyes. Well anyway, each cutter has a supply of burls which are now quite dead. Because the outside of the wood is dry, it has to be wet before cutting, or else it might chip when it comes into contact with the huge blade. The cutter studies the burl before making the first cut, as this one is crucial—sort of like learning to carve a turkey with the grain so it cuts real easy. The burl splits—revealing a small central hollow cavity containing what looks like red water; the central portion of the burl, also tinged with red which fades the further it recedes from the center; interior wood; and plateau, that part of the burl containing the outer crust or covering.

From here the cutter cuts up the rest of the burl and throws the blocks into various sacks, depending on whether the wood was from the outer plateau surface or the interior of the burl, and also depending on the size of each block.

So now we have these blocks of wood, all in sacks according to first grading. What happens now? The wood, sack by sack, is boiled. Although the wood is dead, it still has all kinds of nasty stuff in it that would turn the mouth of a pipe smoker inside out if this step wasn't taken first. You see, boiling removes most of the sap and other impurities and replaces it with water.

After boiling, the blocks are spread, each according to their own grade, to surface dry, after which time they are re-graded. Grading is very subjective because no one knows what is *in* the block. At this time in history plateau is considered very high quality, whereas in the '20s Alfred Dunhill asserted "The centre of the root yields the most perfect pipe that can be obtained."

After the second grading the blocks are supposed to continue to dry for an additional 18 months before they are ready for selection. Actually this doesn't always happen—depending on the need of the pipemaker(s) in question or on how badly the sawmill needs cash.

Pipe bowls cannot be made if the wood is too wet or too dry. Too wet and it doesn't cut correctly, and it also shows patches of dampness; too dry and the wood chips away when cut. So an equilibrium has to be reached before a bowl can be fashioned—whether by hand or by machine. Once this equilibrium has been reached, we can divide pipe bowls into two types—the cured and the uncured.

The *Uncured* have gone through all the processes mentioned above, but no more. The pipe bowl is turned, the mouthpiece attached, finishing is completed, and the pipe is ready for sale. Pipes fitting this description are the vast majority sold today. They are relatively inexpensive, made by machine, and almost always have putty fills. They are strictly utilitarian. They may smoke well; they may not. Usually they require exten-

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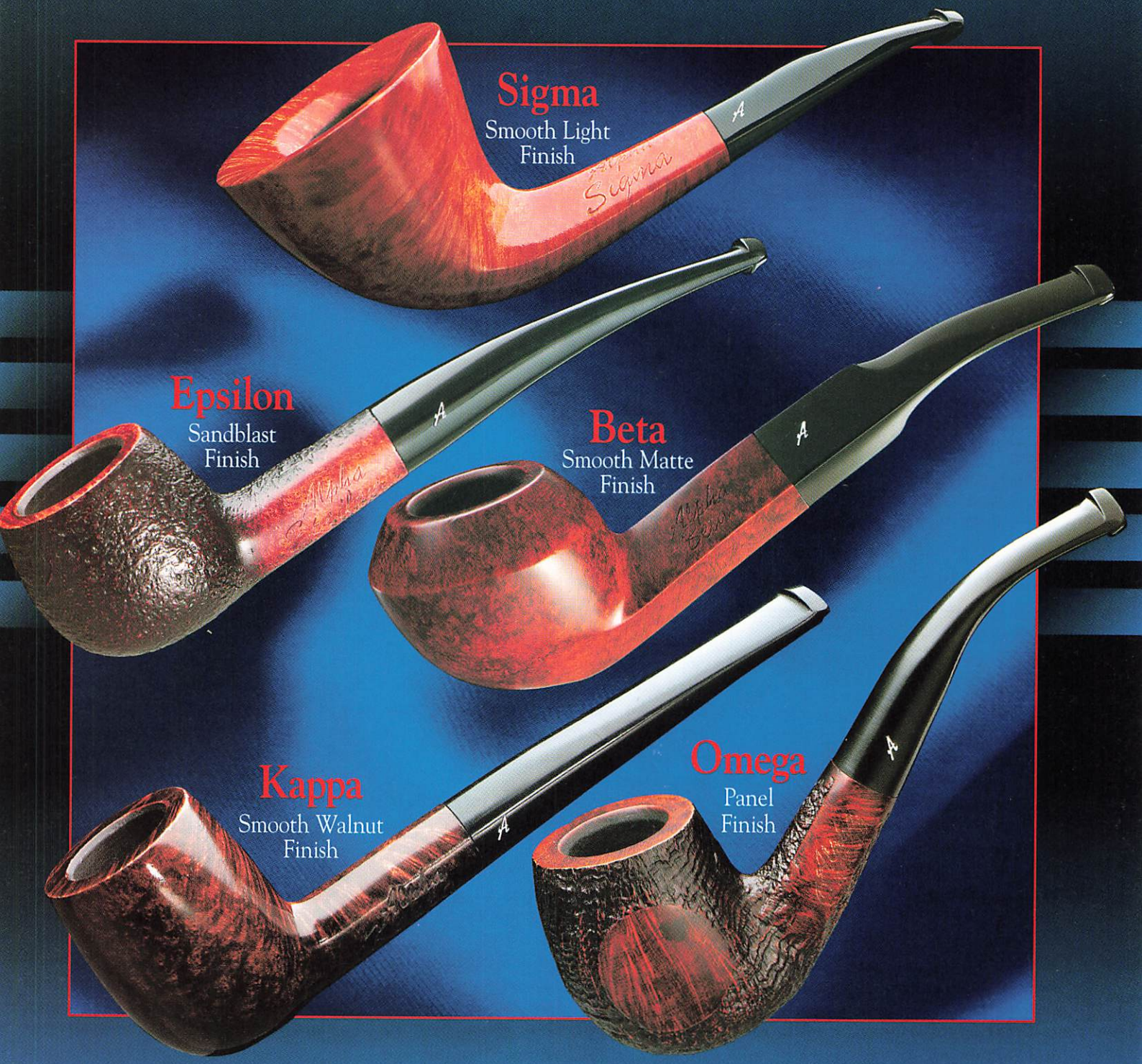

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sive "break-in" before a well-regarded flavor can come through.

The *Cured* continue to undergo processing in order to ensure a delicious smoking experience. These constitute the gentlemen farmers of briar pipes. There are all kinds of curing methods, and folks are coming up with new ones all the time. But I'll just talk about the three main types:

Kiln drying—some say that this isn't a curing method at all, but just a quick way to get wet wood into condition to be turned. Others swear that, with their method of heat control, this method works just as well as air curing and takes only days or weeks instead of years. Kiln drying is essentially oven drying. Blocks are put into a kiln or oven and dried with artificial heat. Care has to be taken to turn the blocks while in the kiln or one part of a block may dry more quickly than another, causing it to split and so become useless.

Air curing—with this method, what was started in the sawmill is continued by the pipemaker. This is a very costly method in that many year's supply of briar is literally sitting around the workshop—for years—before it can be used. Briar is purchased from the sawmill, taken to the workshop or storage shed and put on wire racks to continue drying or curing. The blocks have to be turned every so often to ensure even drying or they will split. This aging, depending on the type of briar and on the pipemaker, goes on for three to five years. Now you have to remember—most of the bad stuff was taken out at the sawmill by boiling. It's the remaining sap, resins, impurities that this continued aging is after. These handcrafters are real "artistes"; they want the stuff they make to be perfect. If a lot of their money is tied up in doing so—that's the way it has to be.

Oil curing—originally invented by Alfred Dunhill as a way to reduce the time needed for air curing, but not reduce the quality of an air-cured block. I quote from the patent application filed with the United States Patent Office on Oct. 14, 1918, by Alfred Dunhill:

> In the manufacture of tobacco pipes, from brier (sic) and other woods it is often advisable to employ oil in the preparation and finishing of the pipe, but such employment of oil is open to the objection that when such pipes are first used the heat of the burning tobacco causes such oil to exude, and not only impart an unpleasant flavor in the mouth of the smoker, but also destroy the finished glossy appearance of the exterior surface of the pipe. In order to overcome this objection, more especially in pipes of high quality, they are frequently stored for a considerable period, such as twelve months or longer, to insure the perfect incorporation of the oil with the fibers of the wood and to thoroughly season the pipe. But *it will be obvious that such storage of manufactured or partly manufactured articles represents capital lying idle, and the object of the present invention is to prepare and season such pipes, as to render them ready for sale and use in a comparatively short space of time.* [my italics]

Dunhill led the way in developing a whole new curing system—a system that many people from around the world swear was and is the best in the world. From 1918 onward, Dunhill pipes were steeped in a bath of vegetable oil or oils, and then placed on brass heat pegs that stood over heated gas jets. The heat was controlled so that, over a period of weeks the oil would exude from the bowl bringing with it sap, resins and other impurities. This "exudate" was periodically wiped from the surface of the pipe bowl before it could harden into an impervious coating. In a manner of weeks the pipe was cured. But this type of curing is different from air curing; the flavor caused by the curing is different. Nutty, say some; oily, say others. Advocates of this system feel that the fibers in the wood are somehow changed, made more durable and able to withstand higher temperatures than an air-cured or kiln-cured pipe.

So there you have it: one heck of a lot of time, effort and money is invested to ensure a really pleasant smoking experience. As I said before, these guys are "artistes"; they are perfectionists. They want the stuff they make to be as perfect as humanly possible. And while no one can guarantee that a properly cured pipe will smoke wonderfully (because that is up to nature) the craftsmen who make these goods have tried to warrant just that. *P&T*

To call such fine tobaccos anything less than treasure, is a call for mutiny.

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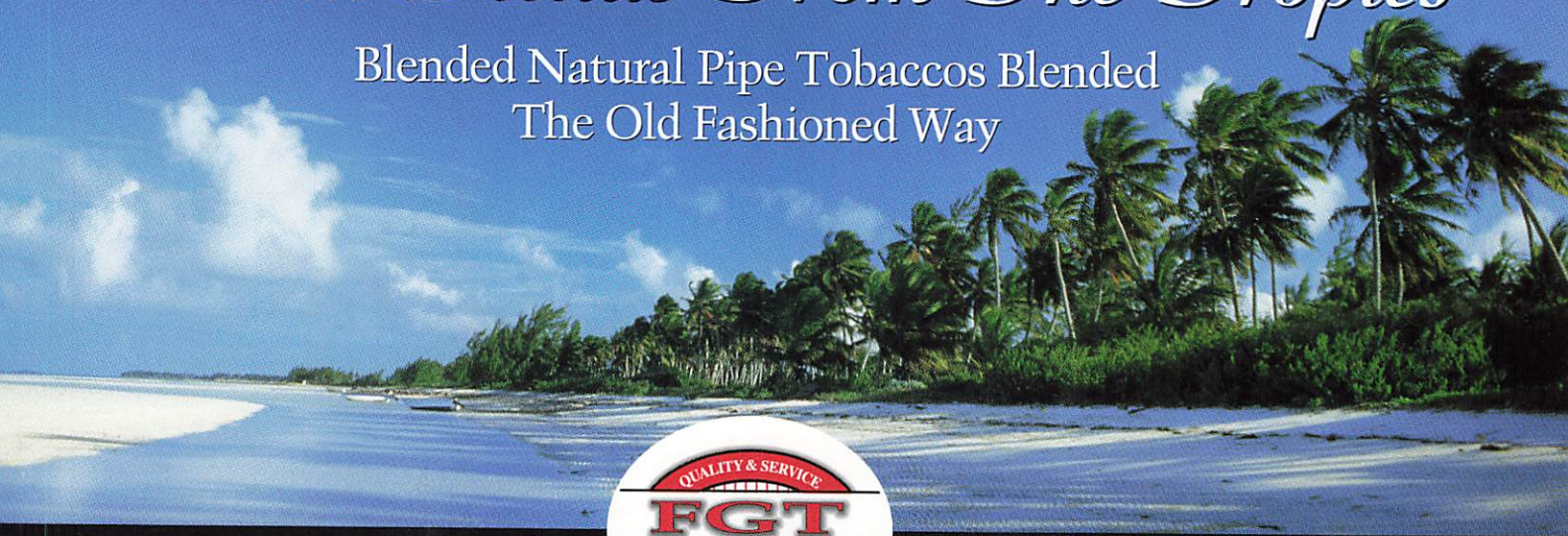

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San Antonio Conductor

A lifelong dedication to music leads conductor George Archer Winters to a triumphant recital by the Winters Chamber Orchestra

by Dayton Matlick

As the time for the performance draws close, the noise from the audience dies to a soft rustle in anticipation, with an occasional cough to punctuate the suspense. The echoes in the vast, Romanesque Motherhouse Chapel slowly fade into silence.

The 93-member choir and the expanded Winters Chamber Orchestra are poised around the alter as baritone soloist Timothy Jones and conductor George Archer Winters make their way through the orchestra to the front. Eager applause greets the principals and the beginning of Johannes Brahms' German Requiem.

In his "tails," Winters looks even taller than his lean six-foot, four-inch height as he climbs a makeshift podium. It positions him high enough that the choir members can see him over the massive marble alter.

His hands rise and slowly set the beat for the deep and somber first movement. The rich tone of the violas floats over the lower notes of the double basses. The orchestra stops as the chorus sings slowly, ethereally, "Selig sind, die da Leid tragen, denn sie sollen getröster werden" (Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted....). Orchestra and chorus take turns as they continue, heightening the emotional impact. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy...."

The music gently fills the high-vaulted ceilings of the 94-year-old chapel, owned by the Sisters of the Incarnate Word. Its recent multimillion-dollar refurbished walls and ceiling gleam and glow. The overflow audience, sitting even on the steps leading up to the choir and organ loft, is rapt from the first moment, a tribute to both Brahms and to the performers that they, over the years, have learned to admire and respect.

Winters guides the orchestra that bears his name with sensitivity, tuned to what he feels is the composer's intent.

•••

This night had its genesis in 1968, during his junior year at Robert Louis Stephenson High

School. During his years at this Pebble Beach boarding school for boys, George had become close pals with three other students—John Kongsaard, Dade Thieriot and Greg Guistina. They did everything together. It was an age of search for meaning and self.

They listened to The Beatles and Simon and Garfunkel. Like myriads of teenagers in those years, they read the works of Zen Master Allen Watts and debated the nature-oriented philosophy of Robinson Jeffers.

Then one lazy afternoon, George and John listened to a recording of Beethoven's 7th Symphony and the world changed. "It was music like nothing I had ever experienced before," says George. "I had listened to a lot of different kinds of music, but Beethoven's 7th had power that day. I was transported; it was an epiphany—a revelation!"

By the time he graduated from high school, George knew that the rest of his life would be built around classical music. It didn't matter to him at that age that he had no formal training in music, other than a good voice and some choir experience.

Perhaps it was in his genes. Generations of his family had lived in the family house on White Bear Lake, near St. Paul, Minnesota. His Aunt Henny was close to being a concert pianist, but was forbidden to follow a career in music by her father, who didn't believe it was the right thing for a woman to do. However, during her studies and travels, she had become friends with renowned pianist and composer Sergei Rachmaninoff. When he traveled in the States, he would stay at the family house and he and Aunt Henny would play together for hours.

And then there was George's father, Ray Winters, who played trumpet in a jazz band during the Depression to make ends meet. Ray later became a grain broker for Archer Daniels Midland Corporation. He specialized in buying barley and turning it into malt for making beer. When George was two and a half years old, the family, which included an older brother and sister, moved from Minnesota to California where Ray worked in various jobs. Then he started Great Western Malting in competition with Archer Daniels Midland, a career he expected to pass on to his children, including George.

After graduation from high school, George presented himself at the University of Colorado. With no instrumental experience, he enrolled in voice. That is, until he told his voice teacher he wanted to be a conductor. He immediately was shuffled off to Dr. Abraham Chavez Jr., director of strings.

After initial rejection, and upon reflection by Chavez, he was told, "We do need double bass players. Here's the name and room number of the double bass teacher. Good luck!" When he met with his new advisor, George was told, "I have nothing to offer you but discouragement!"

"That ticked me off so much I was determined to succeed, no matter what," says George. His freshman year was the worst year of his life. Some of the students in his class had been playing their instruments since grade school. Things that George didn't even know existed were second nature to them.

His first step toward catching up was the purchase of a book on basic music. He would walk all over campus striving to memorize the book. "[The key of] E-flat; flats are B, E, A. Four sharps minor; the sharps are F, C, G, D." Needless to say, he got many strange looks.

"I knew I wasn't cut out for business. I had a calling and I responded. It helped that

Winters' advisor in music school told him, "I have nothing to offer you but discouragement!"

he times were right for that kind of dream. Today, I'm not sure I could pull it off; there are too many forces pushing towards conformity," says George.

By the end of his freshman year, he could play the double bass well enough that he didn't embarrass himself when the University orchestra played the Verdi Requiem. By his senior year he had his own bass and played in three orchestras. Meanwhile, the advisor who had offered "only discouragement" had divorced, remarried and dropped out of music.

The University of Colorado was followed by a one-year Masters program at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York. There he studied under legendary bass player Oscar Zimmerman. Zimmerman had played bass for seven years with the NBC Symphony Orchestra under Arturo Toscanini and taught George many things, but especially finesse and bowing.

Neither the University of Colorado nor the Eastman school offered any significant classes about conducting and only a little about composition, the two subjects closest to his heart.

Following graduation from Eastman, George auditioned for symphony orchestras in North Carolina, Arizona and Texas. "I had a good day in San Antonio." says George. The audition went on for 45 minutes. I did a movement of a concerto, sight read, played scales—did whatever I was asked to do. Fortunately, there were few applicants for the two open positions, because I was the second person chosen." He went directly to the Little Rhine Steak House in San Antonio to celebrate.

A few months later, he put everything he owned, including his double bass, into his Plymouth Duster and moved permanently to San Antonio as a member of the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra, with which he has performed for 26 years.

Within a couple of years George decided to try pipes again. His first experiments took place while he was in high school and left intriguing memories. A visit to a tobacconist provided three pipes and tobacco. The result was a disaster. "I must have gotten too much nice because I really got sick," says George. After a couple of days off, with a more cautious approach, and bolstered by determination he accomplished the anticipated results and has been smoking his pipes on a regular basis ever since.

"My grandfather smoked pipes; he was a railroad man," says George. "I remember the mild aroma of his tobacco to this day. I can remember visiting the house on White Bear Lake when I was about 10 years old. He and I and the pipe fished together in a small boat. Such strong, good memories!"

"I have a wide variety of pipes—Dunhills, Stanwells, Charatans. W.Ø. Larsens. I've been in Olé Larsen's store in Copenhagen a couple of times. Also older Parkers, Camoy and Mastro de Paja. I love straight grain pipes, straight or slightly bent billiards. I also have a number of pipes from artisans who produce only a few pipes a year."

A Dunhill seven-day set was a prize purchase. For years, seven pipe smokers would get together each year on George's birthday to relax, swap stories and smoke the pipes. The group included several members of the Ralph Rumbo family. Ralph, better known as "the colonel," is a pipe-smoking tobacconist who today has five tobacconist shops in the San Antonio area. The annual celebrations continued until the hustle of modern life made it impossible for all of them to get together.

George also has an eight-piece meerschaum set with each pipe carved in the likeness of a great composer. He doesn't smoke these because he loves the pure white appearance.

George had bought his original three pipes and tobacco at a small store that subsequently went out of business. He liked the tobacco and went to Ralph's store on San Piedro Street in search of a replacement. His tobacco problems were solved by Keith Rumbo, Ralph's son, who was working in the store at the time. George and Keith worked for

"I love straight grain pipes, straight or slightly bent billiards."

Winters poses with the Dunhill seven-day set that he and friends traditionally smoked each year on his birthday.

The church resonates with music during rehearsal.

Appreciation for the excellence of the Orchestra had grown until the problem became crowd control.

over a month, with Keith blending one sample after another until George declared it was just right. It is a mild blend, perhaps reminiscent of his grandfather's tobacco, made up primarily of light and dark Cavendish, with a hint of vanilla. It's carried in all of the Rumbo stores as George's Blend.

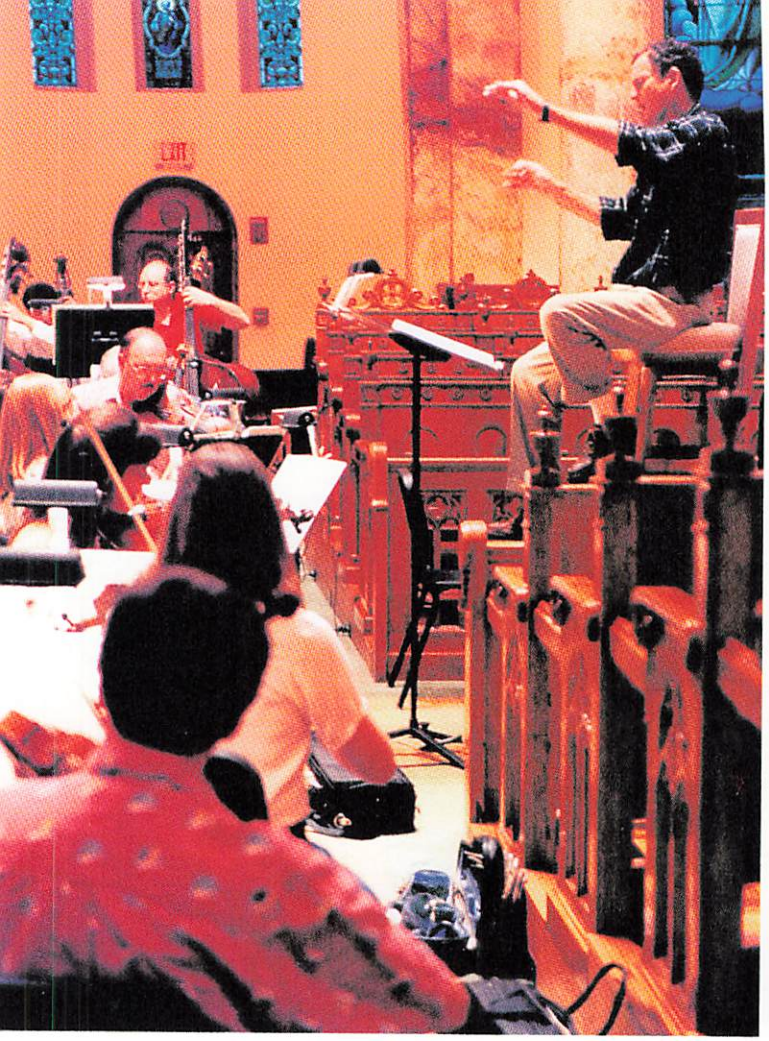
George has attended most of the eight Rumbo pipe dinners, occasionally arriving in "tails" after a performance of the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra.

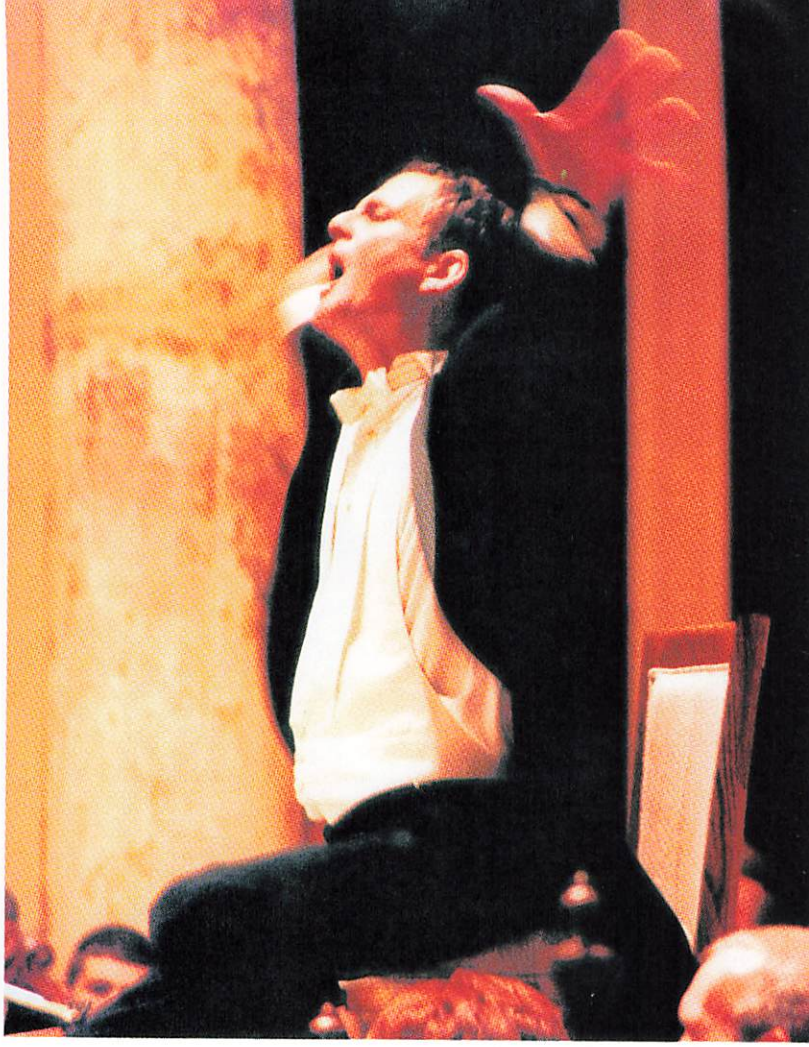
After a couple of years with the Orchestra, George was still filled with the urge to conduct and to compose, with little opportunity to fulfill those urges. Then, in 1976, George formed the Winters Chamber Orchestra, made up of professional musicians who played with him in the San Antonio Symphony Orchestra. The performances through the years have been free, supported by private and commercial donors, the San Antonio Department of Arts and Cultural Affairs, the Texas Commission of the Arts, Trinity University, the University of the Incarnate Word, and Omega Phi Fraternity. In the early days, he also resorted to bingo, auctions, Randy's Rodeo on Bandura Road, and, when necessary, dug into his own pocket. (Note: George has also taught music at Trinity University for 25 years and, more recently, at Incarnate Word University.)

The first performance of the Winter Chamber Orchestra was held in November o 1976. "There were more people in th orchestra than there were in the audience, said Mary Walsh, who has been a supporter o the orchestra ever since and currently is trea surer of the Orchestra's board of directors. B the mid-1980s, appreciation for the excel lence of the Orchestra had grown until th problem became crowd control. At one per formance in 1988, more than 600 peopl crowded into a hall rated for 320.

One of the keys to community acceptanc was a Brückner Festival performed by th Orchestra in September 1980. George love Brückner, a 19th century composer, wh wrote long, complex symphonies. Performin even one such symphony is a challenge. Th Winters Orchestra performed a differen Brückner symphony each night for fou nights, a task similar to climbing Mt. Everes The reviews and mentions in the San Antoni media were strong and favorable, creating a awareness of the Orchestra and its capabili ties that had been lacking.

Throughout the years, George has bee loyal to the musicians who perform under h





baton, and they have been loyal to George and his dreams.

David Law, president of the Winters Chamber Orchestra board of directors, has been playing French horn in the orchestra for more than 20 years. "For the members of the San Antonio Symphony, the Orchestra was another opportunity to perform; another source of money. But it was also George. He brings a tremendous amount of energy and creativity into every performance.

"He brings his own interpretation to each performance. He mainly communicates his desires nonverbally. Although he has his own vision, he is always open to suggestions from the professionals in the Orchestra," says Law.

Joan Christenson, the Orchestra concert master, has been part of the effort for 16 years. The orchestra members first got to know each other through an informal San Antonio golf group. "The group was made up of some pretty bad golfers in the beginning, but over the years, lessons have helped us develop a much better game.

"One key to George's success is that he is nonjudgmental. He is also extremely loyal to the players. But he also feels the music from his heart. The advantage he has with the chamber orchestra versus a symphony orchestra is that he doesn't have anyone telling him what he can and can't do. Because of his love for music, we all try our best for him."

•••

The final movement of the Brahms Requiem slowly builds until it encompasses the whole chorus. The word Selig (blessed) brings back the somber chorus of the first movement until the music of both movements merge into one. The words from Revelation 14:13 ring: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: "Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Perhaps appropriately, George Archer Winters will take a year's sabbatical next year after his 25th anniversary performance of the Winters Chamber Orchestra. The April performance will be Anton Brückner's 4th Symphony, the "Romantic." Although Brückner is not as well known in the United States as some of the other 19th century composing giants, his complex compositions have had a great influence on George's own compositions, many of which have been performed by the orchestra. One of George's music students jokingly referred to George's compositions as "hill country Brückner."

The time off? George has two interests in addition to music that have suffered inattention while music dominated—archeology and meteorology. Next year, they will get their turn. *P&T*

"He brings his own interpretation to each performance."

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Ardor

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by Chuck Stanion

Italy is filled with wonderful people and history and customs and sights, and you should go there to see for yourself at your earliest opportunity. The landscapes make your heart and eyes grow large... lakes and mountains and seas of indefinable colors fill the world, contrasting with a sky that hangs blue and crisp and almost touchable over the cities and countryside—unless it's raining, of course; then the sky sits on your head like a cold wet sponge. But on good days it is most romantic and picturesque.

The Lake Como area, home of Ardor Pipes, is especially breathtaking. The lake reflects the surrounding hillsides, which are striated with narrow winding streets filled with small cars going way too fast in way too many directions. Yes, Italy can make you appreciate life, especially if you do much driving.

Though the traffic on the Italian streets is adrenaline inducing, the architecture of the buildings that line them is soothing. The homes are inviting, as are the businesses. Small family-owned shops, rather than malls and superstores, are the norm.

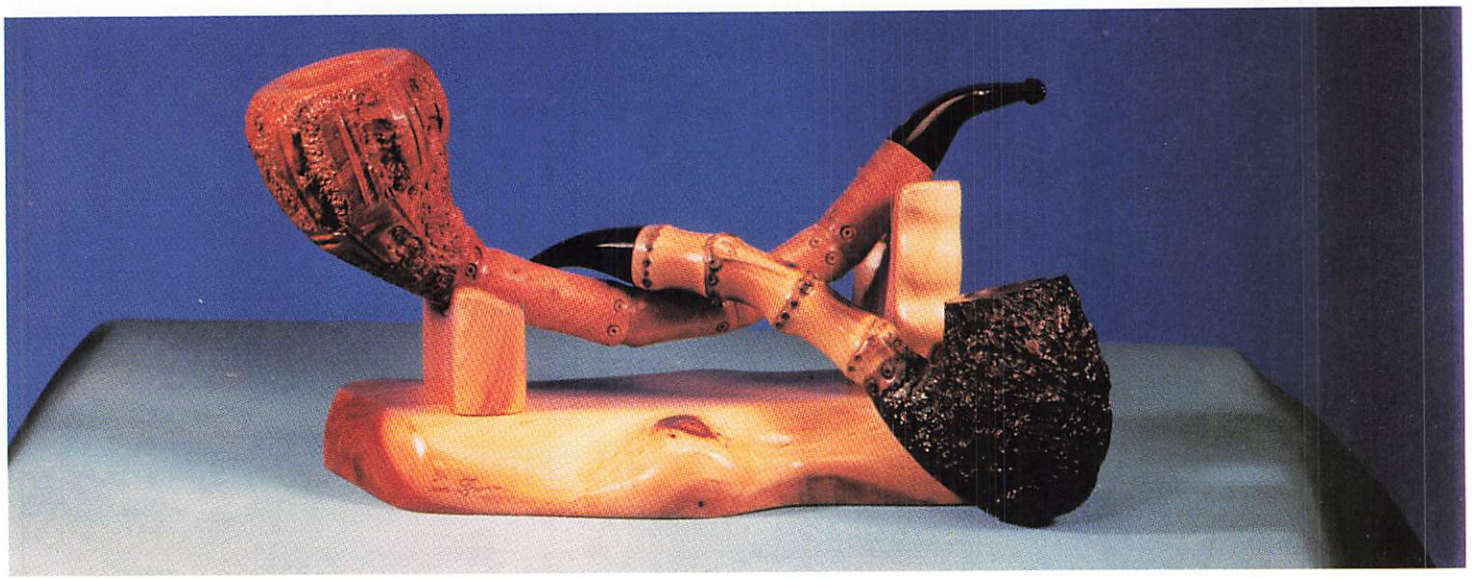
One such enterprise is Ardor, a company created by the Rovera family, which now has four generations of pipe-crafting experience.

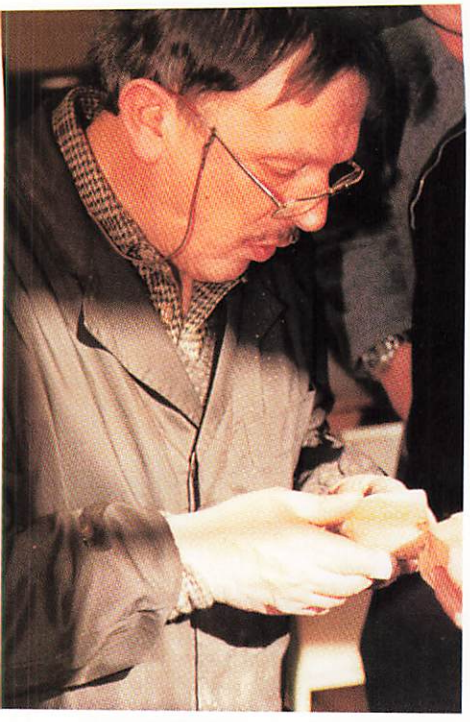
The building is large and angular, and houses living quarters for the family, the pipe factory itself, and a retail shop that sells not only pipes, but woodcrafts of all sorts: chess sets, walking sticks, jewelry boxes and various accessories. The pipes, though, are the main attraction.

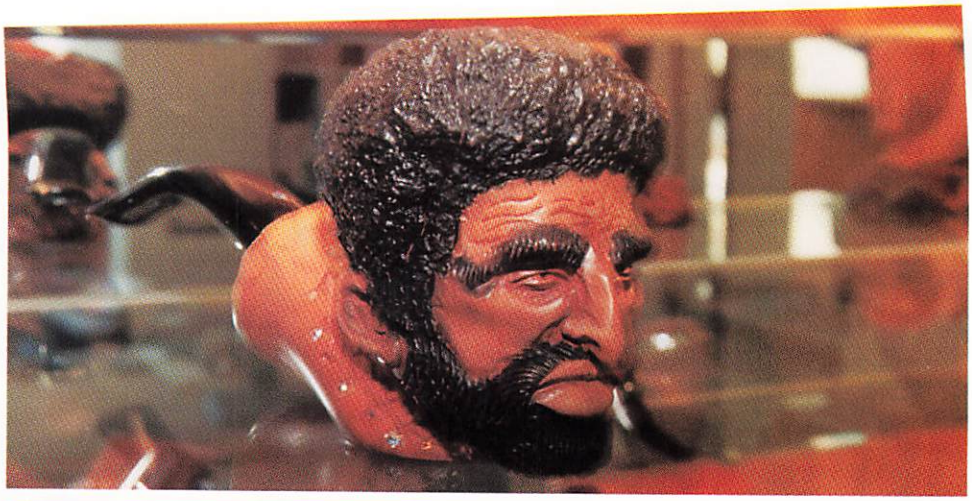
Dorelio Rovera is the creative force behind Ardor pipes. He is a man in his 50s, with a carefree style and somewhat disheveled appearance, though that casual attitude ends where his pipes are concerned. When he examines a pipe, he scrutinizes the lines, the balance, the symmetry and overall workmanship. Like any sculptor, he is minutely aware of every nuance of shape. And above all else, he is his own worst critic. "Every pipe must be perfect," he says through his son Damiano, who translates his Italian into English. "I will not have my name and reputation on a pipe that is less."

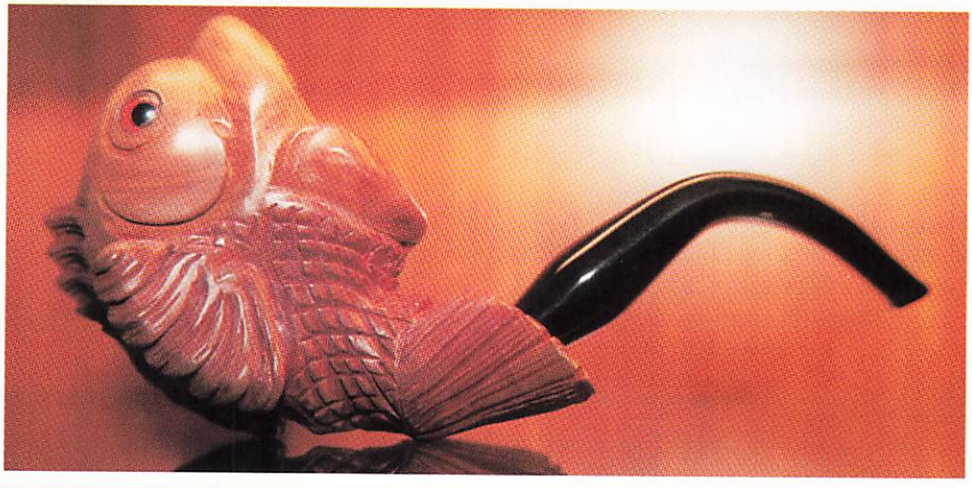
Damiano is also a pipemaker and, as such, represents the fourth generation of carvers in the Rovera family. In his mid-20s, Damiano claims he is merely in an apprentice stage of his carving career.

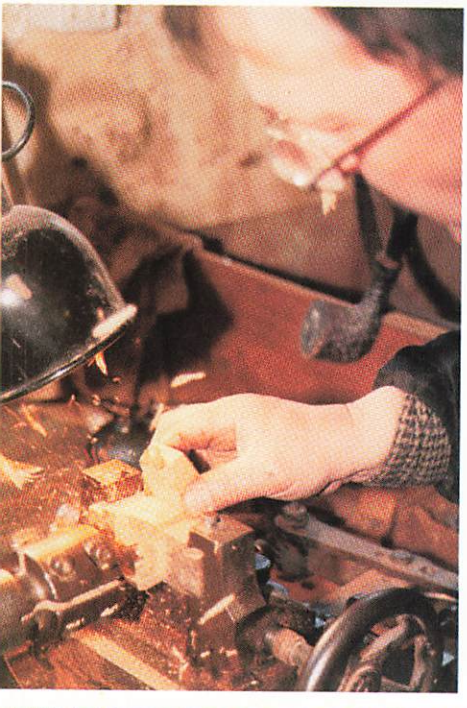
Ardor pipes are well known for creativity of texture (as seen in the pipes below) as well as skilled carvings of animals and people. Dorelio Rovera, pictured on the opposite page, is a third-generation carver and current administrator of Ardor Pipes. Like his father, Angelo, who carved the two human head pipes pictured, he too is a skilled pipe sculptor. The fish pipe in the center is Dorelio's creation.

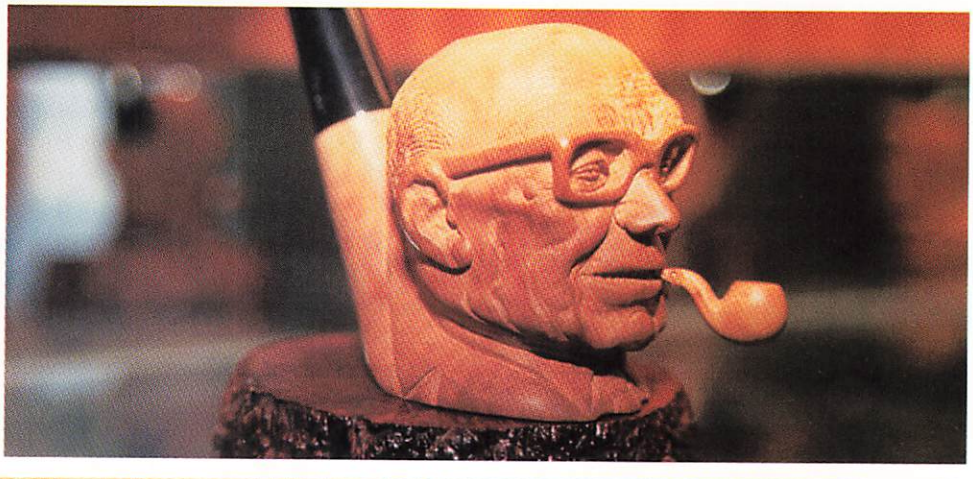


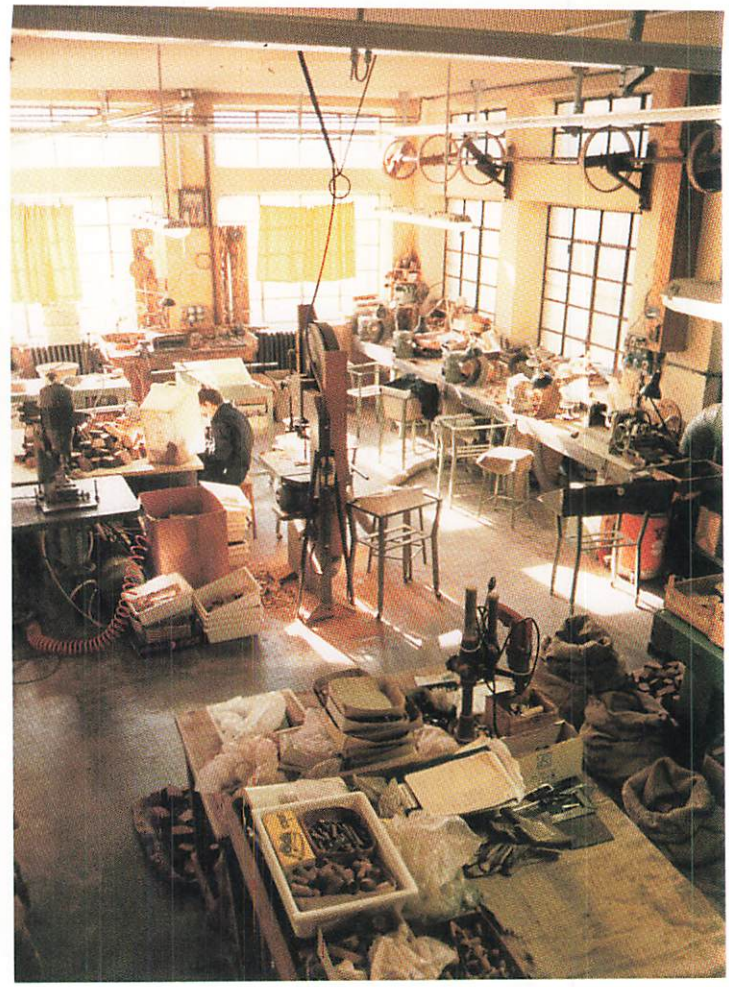












Damiano Rovera, fourth-generation carver, is quickly becoming a skilled craftsman under his father's tutelage.

though his pipes clearly show the sophistication of many years of experience. He started working with his father in the shop at age 18, though he left for a time to pursue a degree in accounting. "But I never loved it like I love pipes," he says. "And I always knew I wanted to work with my father. So now I am learning to be a pipemaker."

The two Roveras make an excellent team. Damiano's considerable skills and artistic vision sharpen more and more under the tutelage of his father; Dorelio's vast experience and unremitting perfectionism are challenged to even higher levels as he teaches his son. They learn from each other, and Ardor pipes reap the benefits of the collaboration.

This has happened before, by the way. Damiano is now learning from Dorelio, who learned from his father, Angelo, who learned the craft after his own father, Francesco Rovera, who helped start the company that would become Ardor Pipes.

Francesco Rovera was one of four brothers who joined together and started the pipe factory in Varese, Italy, making pipes that were sold throughout Europe under the Rovera name. The philosophy of the firm was somewhat different back then, with quantity of production given more emphasis than currently. Those pipes, dating back to 1911, were machine-made on equipment driven by water power.

Today the equipment is electrically powered, but even with that manufacturing advantage, the pipes are much less numerous, because each Ardor pipe is handmade to the highest individual quality. But it was a difficult evolution from the machine-made Rovera pipes to handmade Ardors.

The company's decision to change from mass-produced to handmade pipes was not easy to make, though it was arguably the best thing that could have happened. It was Dorelio who first concluded that high quality should be the defining characteristic of his family's products. His father, Angelo, who was incredibly skilled at hand-sculpting pipes in the likeness of any person or animal he wished, felt that the machine-made production would be more likely to maintain profitability. But Dorelio, with his perfectionist's spirit, felt that reduced numbers and increased quality should be the defining direction for the company.

Angelo agreed that Dorelio's strategy could be tried. That sounds like a simple decision, but quality does not happen with a snap. Dorelio had been working since the age of 13 with his father, gradually getting better and better at his art. The father and son team had worked for years together toward the perfection that would become synonymous with the name Ardor, and Dorelio's *Fatta a Mano* (handmade) pipes had proved their considerable superiority before the shift in the company's philosophy could be considered.

But at last they were ready, and Dorelio and Angelo decided a new name was required to herald the shift in manufacturing. They combined their initials—Ar (Angelo Rovera) and dor (Dorelio Rovera) together became Ardor, and the Ardor Pipe Company was christened. The meaning of the word was not lost on the team. It is a word that designates a fiery intensity of emotion, enthusiasm and devotion. "We are passionate about our pipes," says Dorelio. "Making pipes is scientific, yes. Precise engineering is required. But just as important is the emotion."

Both of those qualities are evident in abundance. "My father can solve any problem," says Damiano. As that statement is translated for Dorelio, he shakes his head. "No," he says, "some things are just impossible."

"All right," continues Damiano, "he can solve any problem within reason, then. I am always learning from him—I learn from him every day. He can show me why a pipe I am making has become different from the original design. He can solve problems I might have with the drilling of the pipe. He shows me how to make a design work better. I still make many mistakes."

Second-generation carver Angelo Rovera, left, died last year. Well-known for his detailed carvings, his workbench still stands in the Ardor workshop just as it was when he last worked at it, with several partially finished pipes lined along his shelf, never to be completed.

Dorelio smiles at this. "The mistakes are important," he says. "More is learned from failure than from success. And many things can be learned only by making many, many pipes and many, many mistakes."

After years of working with his father, Damiano is reaching a point where his own pipes may soon be included in the Ardors coming to the United States. "I hope to be able to put my name on some pipes, maybe this year, maybe next year," he says. "I am not in a hurry. My father will tell me when the time is right." His pipes clearly differentiate his own artistic vision from that of his father's. They have the distinctive Ardor creativity, but also distinguish themselves in design. As these two craftsmen work together, exciting changes in Ardor design are a surety.

But many things will not change, such as the unwavering commitment to handcrafted excellence that has become standard to Ardor pipes. This excellence starts with the right materials. The briar used is Sardinian, Ligurian and Calabrian—the best that can be found. And this briar is bought at every opportunity, so that it can age properly. "We go directly to the different sources to analyze and choose the best briar," says Dorelio. "And the different growing areas require that we buy briar at different specific times of the year, to guarantee the best that can be had from that area. Our briar is our bank. We must always have enough aged briar on hand for any potential needs."

The workshop has been designed for the optimum drying and aging of the briar, with a large sliding door (very much like a garage door) in the briar storage area, so that the right airflow may be maintained. Depending on the temperature, humidity and amount of wind on any given day, it is opened appropriately. "Briar must be properly dried," says Dorelio. "There can be no wind on the briar for some years. Then it must be in a place with some light breeze through the windows. It must not dry too quickly, or become too dry, because it will crack. Correct air drying takes from 10 to 12 years."

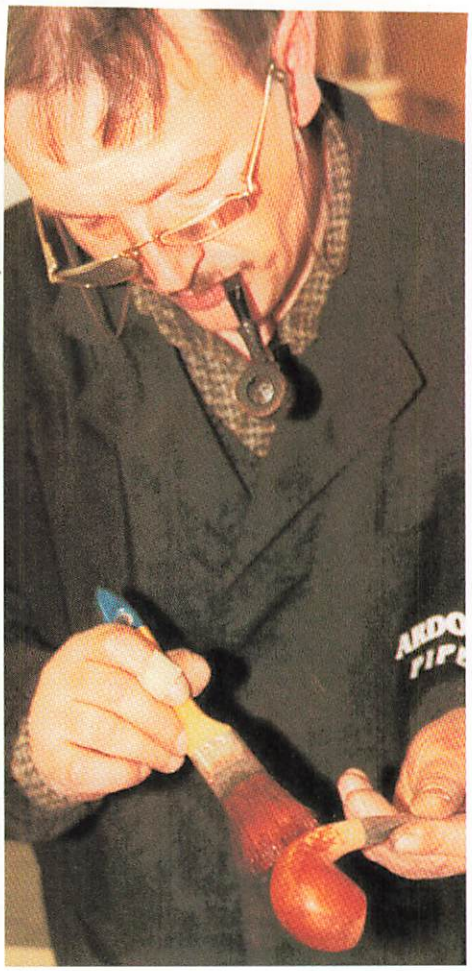
In another part of the large shop, exceptional, very old briar is stored for special edition pipes. "This is the best of the best," says Dorelio, picking up a couple of the blocks of this special wood. "Listen." He claps two ebauchons together, and the *clock* sound they make pleases him. The humidity of the wood, he explains, is determined by listening and feeling the briar. "When briar is ready to be worked," he says, "it tells you so." Still, even with the careful preparation and selection of the briar, Ardor experiences 20 to 25 percent waste.

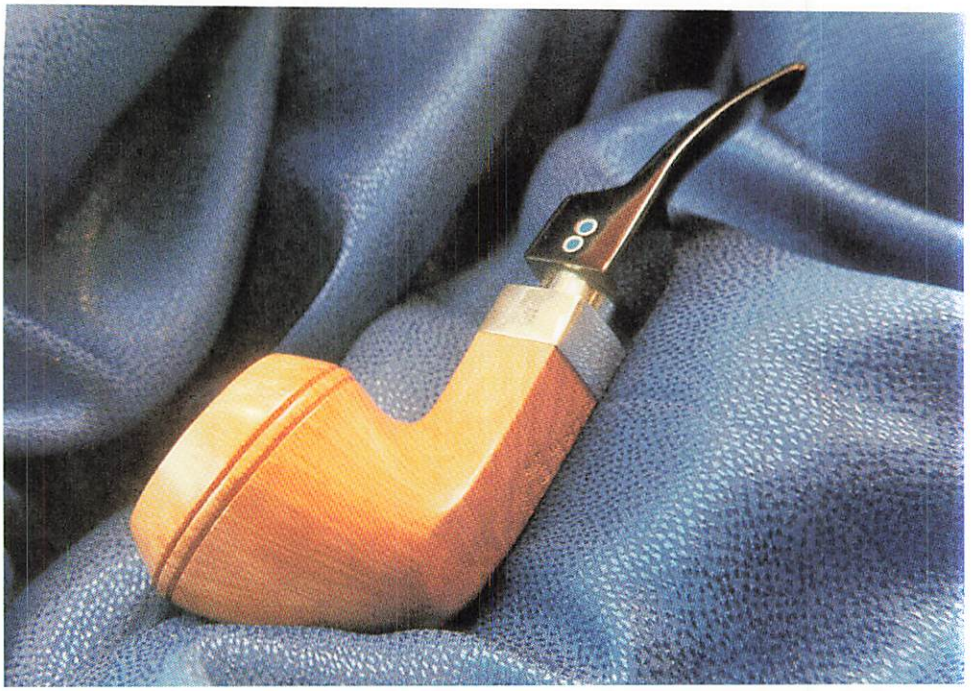
The factory has up to five workers at any given time, but all the pipes are handfinished by Dorelio himself. The other staff are part-time, and perform only the preliminary steps in the manufacturing, such as sorting the briar and drawing shapes on the blocks with templates of standard shapes. But the carving and finishing is all done by hand by Dorelio, and to some extent by Damiano. The "handmade" designation is taken very seriously here.

The stems are shaped from acrylic stock, in either black or brown. No production blanks are used—each Ardor stem is cut from rods, drilled, shaped and bent by hand. Many Ardor stems are cut in the signature *Pennellessa* shape. The word means "paintbrush," and designates the widening of the mouthpiece near the lip button, a design that guarantees comfort for the smoker.

There are no templates for the bend of the stems—each is heated and bent to fit the personality of the individual pipe. "Even with pipes in standard shapes," says Damiano, "each is different from all others. You can line up 10 pipes of the same shape, and see that they are truly handmade, because each is individual, each is subtly different in its own way."

This factory produces another line of pipes besides Ardor. It is the RoverArt line, which is marketed primarily in Europe, though a few have come to the





United States. These pipes, named with musical themes (*Melody*, *Armony*, *Sinfony*, etc.) differ from Ardor in stain colors and design, but are also handmade to the highest standards of the Ardor company.

Pride and passion may be the best emotions for defining Ardor pipes. Four generations of dedication cannot be lightly regarded, and pride in that heritage is well-deserved. This pipe company is based on family, and past generations are not forgotten, but revered. Angelo Rovera, who passed away last year, is still present, in a way. His workbench sits just as it did, with half-carved pipes on the shelf above it, exactly as he left them. He is missed, but not entirely gone, and his influence is still felt.

But each generation has brought with it a progression. Dorelio Rovera brought with him a vision of quality, and the company is thriving under his vibrant direction. As Damiano matures under his father's guidance and brings his own unique vision to the company, we can expect to see even more from this exceptional line of pipes and this remarkable family. *P&T*

Ardor Pipes

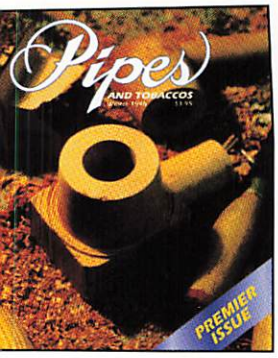
Finishes

Venere Due Punti (Venus Two Points)	Natural straight grain
Venere (Venus)	Smooth honey or natural color
Mercurio (Mercury)	Smooth light orange color
Giove (Jupiter)	Smooth walnut color
Plutone (Pluto)	Smooth Bordeaux lacquer
Nettuno (Neptune)	Smooth black lacquer
Marte Sabbiata (Mars sandblast)	Tan, brown, or red/brown sandblast
Meteora (Meteor)	Carved rock with smooth chips
Urano Roccia (Uranus rusticate)	Tan, black or red/brown rusticate

Models

Modelli Originalli	original shapes
Gurino	curves with saddle mouthpiece
Detective	famous detectives Holmes, Maigret, Marlowe
Damiano	briar bulb on mouthpiece
Dimitri	small pipes with silver rings
Bucaneve	chubby pipes with silver rings
Ninfea	slender silver spigot
Tabacco	carved tobacco leaves
Bamboo	bamboo shanks
Moon	carved with moon craters
Fantasy	acrylic rings on shank and mouthpiece
Fresh Smoke	screw-in bowls
Tulipano	carved tulip leaves, and acrylic on shank
Pipa Sculpite	carved animals and famous faces
Diva	graceful small ladies' pipes
Sherlock Holmes	special yearly series, calabash shape
Brissie	limited series, calabash made with 35-year-old briar in three sandblast finishes

Note: Since the time this article was written, Damiano Rovera's pipes have been included in the Ardor line. Pipes with his stamp will be introduced at the RTDA Trade Show in August.



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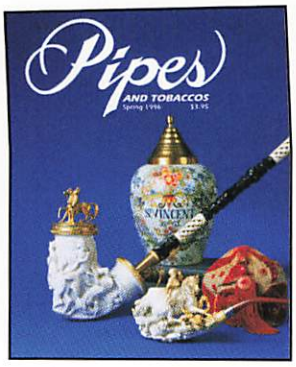

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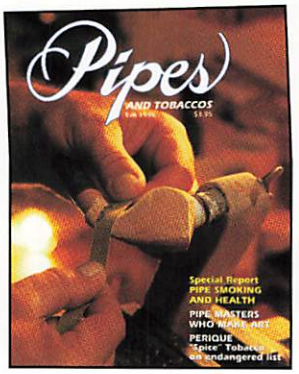

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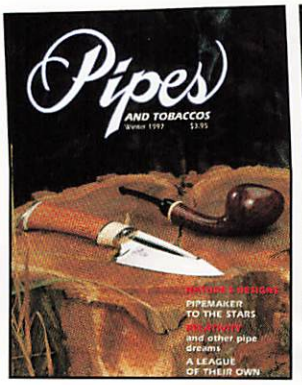

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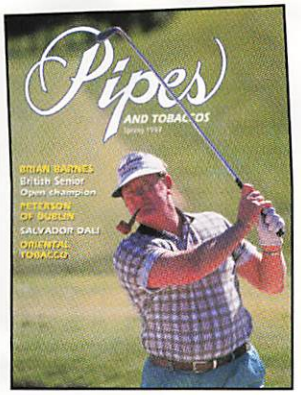

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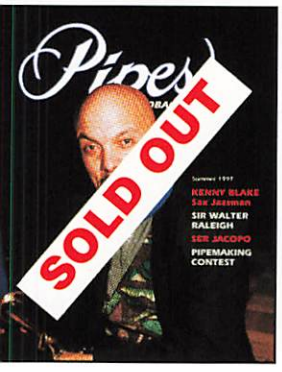

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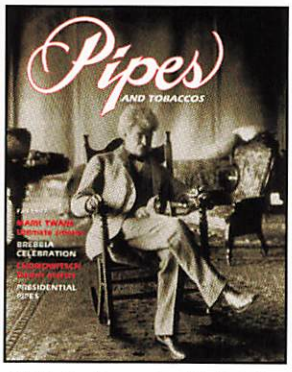

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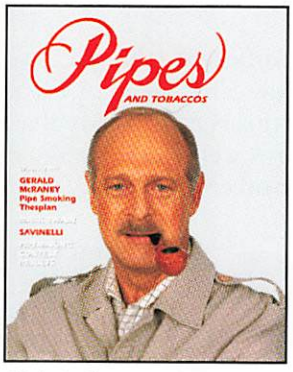

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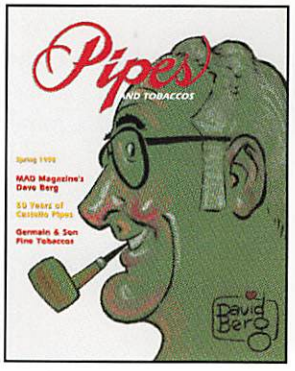

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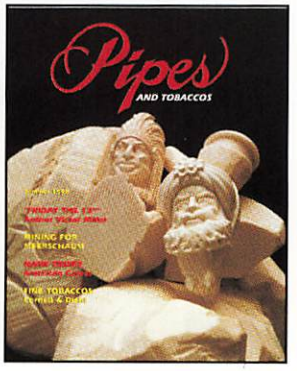

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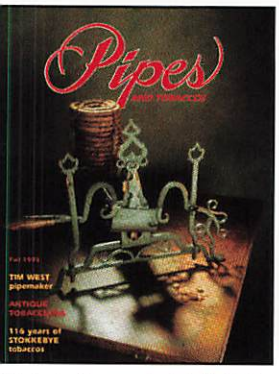

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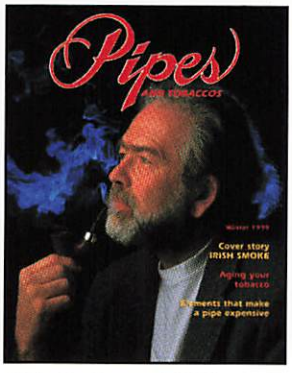

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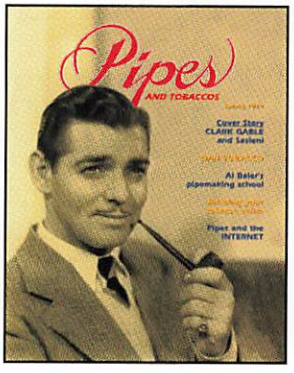

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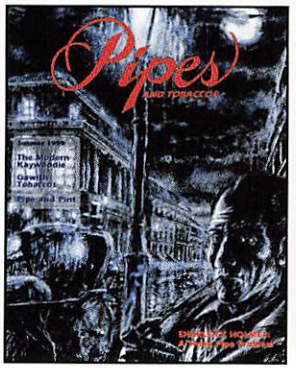

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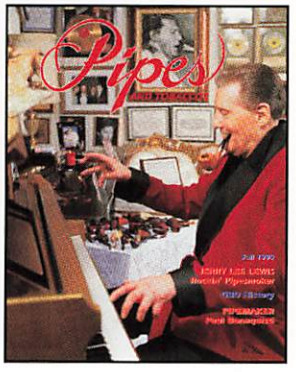

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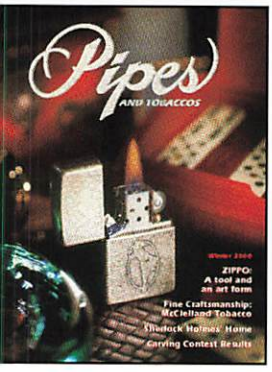

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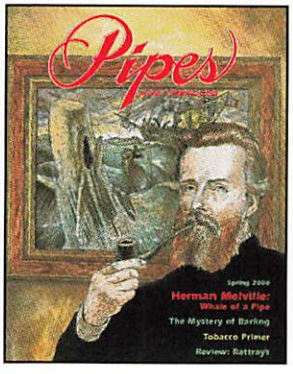

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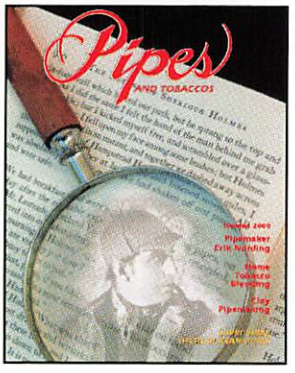

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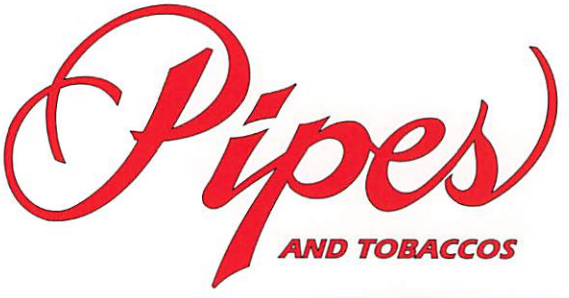

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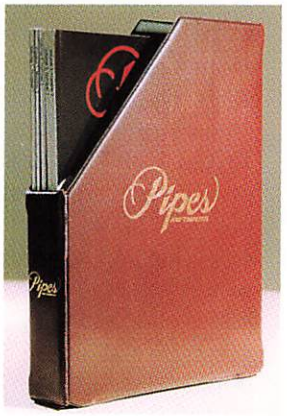

TRIAL BY FIRE

by William Serad

Three distinctive and varied product lines are offered for your consideration this issue, gentle puffer. There are no flakes in the offing, unfortunately, but the aromatic fanciers will have a field day between Caminetto and Davidoff. And I can say with certitude, the English fanciers will find things of note in the entire Ferndown line. Proceeding alphabetically...

Caminetto

Their entire line consists of aromatics, which is strange to me because I smoke English or Balkan blends in their pipes. I don't know about you, but certain pipes seem to favor certain styles of blends, even particular blends, and the Italian pipes like things with Latakia (now there's a gross generality). Be that as it may, these are very unusual as aromatics go, each very different from the next and from the usual black gloppy stuff commonly available. I would also say they would appeal to idiosyncratic tastes, because they are so unusual.

Lombardo (aromatic)
This is mild Carolina bright, Old Belt Virginia, Black Cavendish and Connecticut broadleaf infused with orange and spice. The tin aroma is very appealing, and it is in what the Germans call "wild" cut. It comes quite moist. I can't say I like anything much about this blend. The taste is unexceptional at best, the aftertaste is blah, and the aroma, while smoking and remaining in the room, would charitably be called odd. I don't know whether it is the orange or the spice, or maybe the combination, but I don't think it belongs in a pipe. It is rather different, though, so if you're bored or can't seem to hit the mark, maybe this is it. I will say that it is cool and burns well, but I can say that about $250 sneakers.

Como (aromatic)
Possessing a marvelous tin aroma, this is billed as red and gold Virginia, Burley and Black Cavendish assembled (according to the tin) in oak whiskey barrels with infusions of hickory nut and exotic fruit. The aroma continues with the smoke, which would be winning to any PC crowd except the most die-hard. It is actually very dark and mostly Black Cavendish, the other ingredients somewhat overwhelmed by the flavorings. This is not necessarily a bad thing; they provide a certain complexity beneath the surface. It is also exceptionally moist, and very short cut, so it would serve in any sort or sized pipe. It burns slowly to a mottled black to dark gray ash. Worth a try if you like aromatics; stay far away if you don't.

Barolo (aromatic)
This is remarkably different on several fronts. The blend under the flavoring is of golden and Old Belt Virginias, Burley & rich Orientals. It is a very fine and balanced blend running from black to palest gold. The colors are well mixed and thoroughly variegated showing care with the underlying blend, and as with the others in the series, moist, in short cuts and chunky pieces, a la wild. The curve ball is the "fruity blend of traditional cherry flavors" which reminds me both in the tin and room more of a cherry candy flavor than cherry anything else I've tried, tobacco or not. I am not saying it is bad, but it is unlike any other cherry tobacco, and I've tried 'em all. I would use them as mulch but for fear of killing the plants. A recent exception in my own trials was Rattray's Terry Red, and that, as does Barolo, had a fine underlying blend that tasted of balanced tobacco, despite the horrors of this seeming faux fruit of the pipe. This is so strange, so brilliantly cherry, and yet the blend under the red cloud tastes pretty good. Very unusual.

Umbria (aromatic)
Again, a very unusual aromatic we have here. It is a golden and mature ready-rubbed Virginia blend with a honey flavor. The color is pale, with chunks of the partially rubbed-out flake only slightly darker. Very moist, it lends itself to a loose pack in the bowl. The tin aroma is nearly floral, and when you first light up, it smells like orchids to me, then it sustains a more honey-like aroma. It burns well, and is remarkably cool, given its obvious leaf lineage. It does not leave the walls of the bowl clean, undoubtedly because of the topping. As a Virginia flake fancier, this has some underlying appeal, but it is very flavored and sweetened, well beyond what most flake guys would accept. It is one of those things you just have to try, since the leaf is tasty, and might be a migratory stopping point from straight aromatics to Virginia flakes. On the other hand, it might remind you of your date's wrist corsage from prom night. Try it and see.

Davidoff

The motto of Davidoff's is "The Good Life for those obsessed with quality." And many of you may be familiar with their lines of cigars and cutters, humidors, cognac and lighters. I am not a cigar fancier, so I can't comment on that line of tobacco products, but here we will get a look at their line of tobacco for the pipe. I don't know if obsession is reflected in the pipe offerings. While fine, no single blend gets above very good to me. The line leans heavily toward the aromatic, and none reach my personal obsessive level of taste. They are all respectable, however, and they offer no dogs, more than I can say for many manufacturers. Overall, I think they need to put more attention into the English area, and they seem to have no flakes to bring to our collective gustatory attention. I might have expected something with cigar leaf, too.

English

If I were to prioritize the usual English ingredients in this mild to medium blend, I would say that Virginias figure most prominently, Orientals a close second, followed by Latakia a distant third. I liked this pleasant, gentle sort of English as it displays no objectionable assertive characteristics, though it is a bit off my personal mark. As far as any criticism at all, it might be that this needs more character, and I would think a jolt of additional Latakia would give it. If you favor the lighter, more coy English blends, then this blend might appeal to you. It burns cleanly to a light gray resolution.

Oriental

I was somewhat surprised when I opened the tin on this one. I expected a heavy and exotic aroma, pungent with Orientals. What I found was a lot of pale Turkish leaf with Virginias. This is quite light in character, both in smoke and in flavor. It seems to be lightly flavored, too, but with what is unclear. Despite ingredients that might be used as tinder under other circumstances, it smokes rather coolly, and could be characterized as congenial. Its weight would indicate use as a good first pipe of the day, though I would prefer a heavier version of this with the same blending goals. This is quite unusual, for those fleeing the mundane.

Scottish

A dark brown, rubbed-out flake in what the Danish or Dutch call the Scottish style, this was rather hot and flavorless. It has been sweetened in some way, which would explain the heat, and the room aroma is not particularly appealing. It has no elements of merit to distinguish it favorably that I can discern. It is not offensive, though, and the heat can be controlled by reining in the puffing, but it has nothing going for it either. The leaf appears of high quality and the tin aroma is appealing, so the end result is somewhat surprising. I can't say that I would commend this to any particular taste, but *de gustibus non disputandum* (of tastes there is no disputing).

Danish

This is a very light, very mild and sweet blend of the type favored by the Danish. As an example of its sort, this is wonderful, an excellent representative. The leaf is cased, and it can be pressed to burn hot, though that effect is

against the natural inclinations of the blend. It burns quickly, with a bowl going by in less time than you can imagine, leaving a very pale, fluffy ash and the walls of the bowl clean. Even the original leaf seems light and fluffy as you pack the bowl. It is not excessively cased and flavored, as this type of blend can easily be; it seems dead-on to me. I thought this was delightful, but if you are not fond of Danish aromatics, this will not convert you. Aromatophiles, give it a try, and you might give it a spin if you lean toward the lightest Virginia flakes, too. This is the second best in the line.

Mild

Mild is the name, and mild it is. About half Black Cavendish and half red and golden Virginia leaf, this is heavily cased and quite sweet. It is an exceptionally mild and yet quite flavorful aromatic. It has sweetness without heat, and could easily be smoked all day. The underlying flavor is still tobacco, and not just the toppings. If anything, it reminds me of a high-end Captain Black. If you don't like Black Cavendish based aromatics, this isn't you.

Cool

Darker than the other aromatics in the line, this is mostly black with some flashes of brighter leaf. The aroma is also darker. It is sweet and cased quite a bit, but not distastefully so. And it lives up to its name, because it is exceptionally cool, especially for something that is sweetened this much. It is rather short-cut, and packs well as a result. Even when pressed with agitated puffing it stays cool, but it tastes best smoked in a languid style, where it stays lit with no effort at all. It burns completely to a mottled ash.

Light

To call this light is like saying hydrogen is light. If tobacco were sound, only dogs could hear this. It is positively ethereal. I mean none of this in a pejorative way, but this is the highest, leanest, most insubstantial blend I have ever smoked. About two-thirds red and blond and one-third black, it smells in the tin of something familiar in traditional American blends, perhaps hickory. The flavor is still tasty, and even brilliant rather than light. It is cool, but not satisfying to me because of its utter lack of weight. I am not predisposed toward aromatics to begin with, but if they top your list, you have to try this. It is a testimony to the blender's skill to produce something so light beyond light as this. I can't imagine how it's done. It burns very cleanly for an aromatic, too.

Royalty

My favorite of the Davidoff line, this is an excellent and balanced combination of what I take to be the standard English ingredients perhaps augmented with some Black Cavendish. The color is a fairly uniform and dark, running from mahogany to black. The smell in the tin is intoxicating, of Orientals and Latakia. It is short cut and easily packed and lit. The aroma blossoms from the bowl, and is deliciously cool and as rich as the tin aroma might suggest. It burns completely to a mottled, pale ash and the walls of the pipe are clean. It is monochromatic, however, which suggests tedium over time as much as reliability.

Ferndown

Another familiar name in pipes, these all are as English in style as can be. And they all present wonderful characteristics. For those who think that English-style blends are all the same, just this product line alone would disprove the notion. Each has its own character, and each its point of special note. And, I can recommend each to all Anglo-puffers. They all have a short and fine, nearly shag, cut, making them suitable for any pipe.

Mild Brown (Honeydew)

This is a beautiful, mature honeydew of rich dark Virginias. It is uniformly dark brown and comes as moist as the Caminetto blends. As honeydews go, this is not as sweet as some, and not as heavy as others like Gallaher's, which exhibits more of a dark Virginia origin. It is wonderfully cool and full, and has that characteristic Virginia sweetness nonetheless. It is a bit figgy in the tin, and does hang in the air with a goodly weight to the smoke. A very satisfying blend of Virginias, it strikes the middle ground among things of its genus, and is well

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worth trying. It burns to a fine-looking, clean ash.

Black and Tan (English)
The heaviest of the series, this is a toasted Virginia base with Orientals and the most significant proportion of Latakia. The heady tin aroma is lofted into the surroundings at the pass of a match. The Virginias are the merest background to the Oriental leaf, but willing and amiable members of the club. It is cool and rich, but does not vary in flavor much down the bowl, a characteristic I value. All in all, this is an excellent blend for a contemplative evening in front of a cozy fire.

Yellow and Brown Medium Reserve (English)
The lightest from Ferndown, which is by no means to say light, a base of choice red Virginias is flavored with Orientals in a more subdued fashion. The Virginias are of the highest caliber and delicious. The Orientals are very much a factor in the blend, but less so than the other two blends. Latakia is there with its familiar aroma and excellent burning characteristics, but in a way that augments the other components, making the whole greater than the sum of its leaf. It is round, fulsome without being heavy, an excellent example of the English blending art. It is cool, naturally sweet, and would be an excellent entry into the world of English blends or an all-day smoke for the old hand. Thoroughly recommended.

Red and Orange
This is the middle ground in the Ferndown series, with the characteristic depths of darker Virginia flavors exposed and delineating the blend. The Orientals are still dominant, but the matured red and orange Virginias show their character at various times and in typical ways, with substance and middling sweetness, as the smoke proceeds. Latakia is more harmonious here than ascendant, and the whole is more varied and complex. It is cool and fragrant, and completely delightful. It burns to a dove gray ash leaving the bowl as it found it. Thoroughly recommended. *P&T*

The meaning of life? I didn't climb up here for that. I was just looking for a place where I could smoke.

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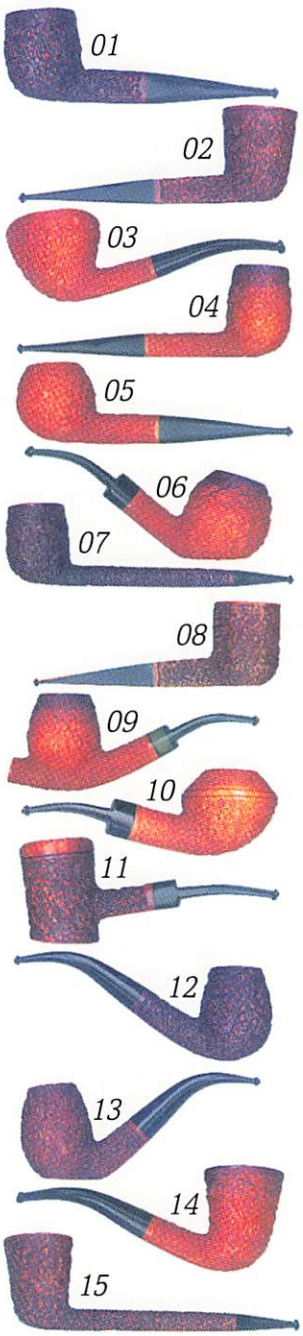

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Former: Danish Designer

Hans Nielsen has 40 years of experience carving pipes in the cradle of modern pipemaking: Denmark

by Chuck Stanion

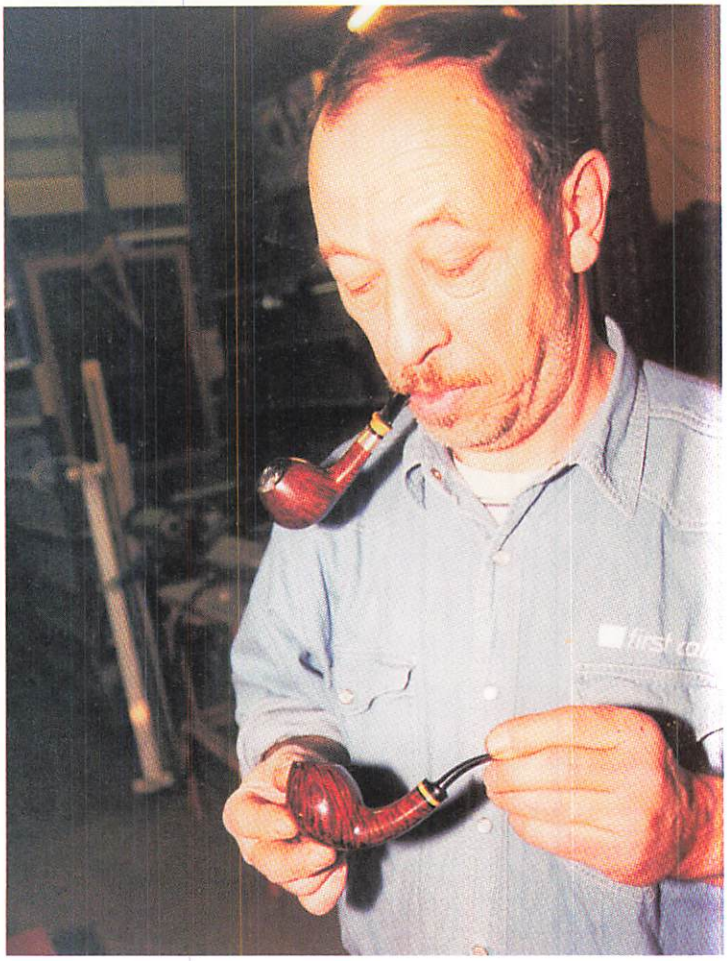
The pipes go by the name Former. That name has nothing to do with a *former* state of being, or with one medium or another being *formed* through craftsmanship, as in one who forms. In fact, in Denmark, the country of origin of these pipes, the word *former* has no meaning at all, except in reference to a very special craftsman: Hans Nielsen.

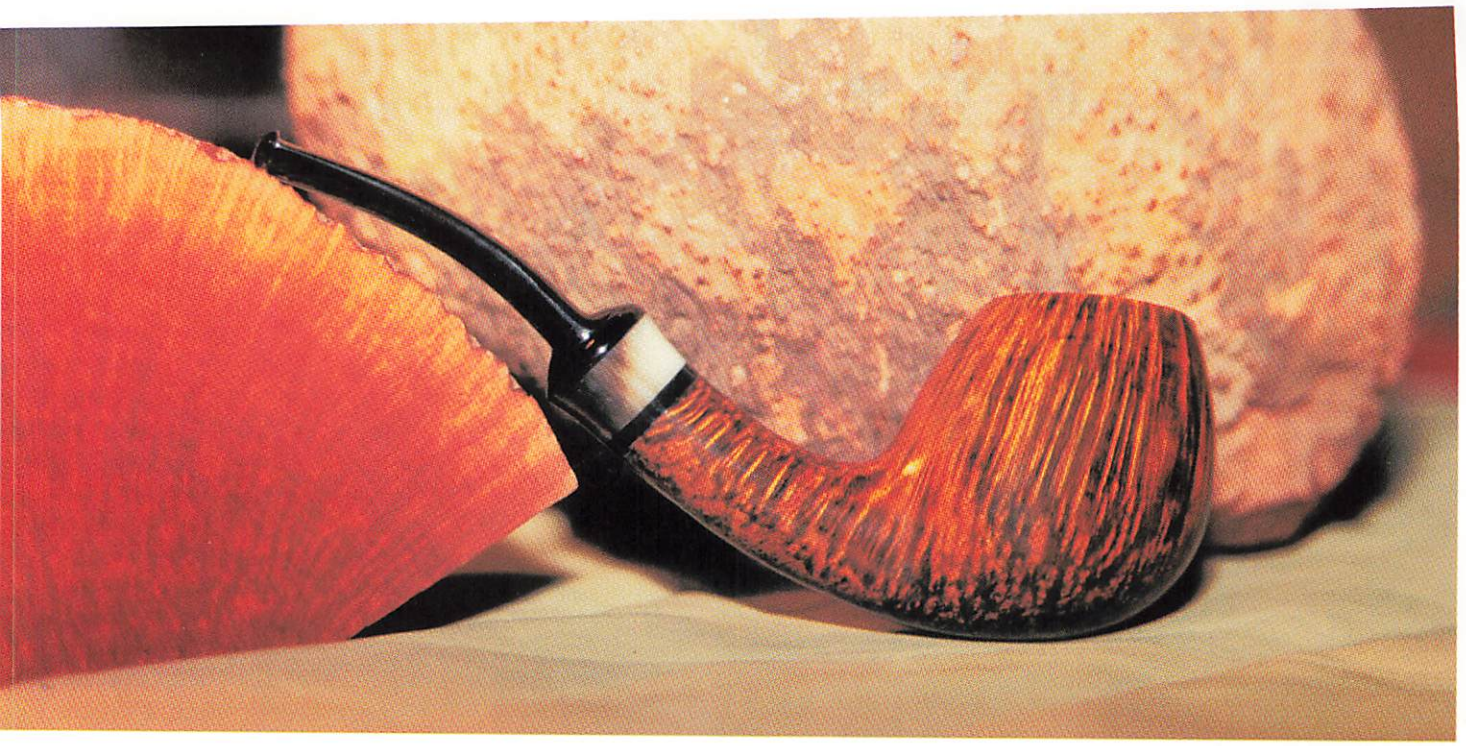
Former is the nickname that Nielsen was given as a child because of a resemblance to the comic actor George Formby. "I think I was only 12 years old," says Former. "I had these two big front teeth—I still have them. But my friends thought I looked like this actor, and started calling me Formby. The name evolved into Former, and it has been my nickname ever since."

It wasn't very much later that Former found his first job in pipemaking. He was 15 years old, done with school, and looking for work. "I wanted something to do with machinery," he says. "I've always enjoyed machinery." He found an advertisement in the newspaper that encouraged people his age to apply. "But when I got there," he says, "there was a line of 50 young people waiting." By the time his turn came, the job was filled.

That may have been a lucky event for him. His next attempt at finding work brought him a job at Poul Rasmussen's pipe shop. Former spent two years there repairing pipes. "My family was not so happy that I took that job," he says, "because the salary was very, very small." However, while the payment may have been small, the education was large, because pipe repair taught him much about the way pipes worked. "Looking back," he says, "I think that was the best way to learn. I learned all the different brands of pipes and their characteristics. I could repair a cracked shank or make a new bowl to replace a burned-out one on a good stem." Soon he could repair just about any disaster that can befall a pipe.

But even though he had a friendly relationship with Rasmussen, he wasn't particularly happy. "I was never allowed to turn bowls or make any pipes," says Former. The job appeared to be a dead end, and he knew he could do some good work with his hands if given the opportunity. After two years with Rasmussen, Former left to take a job as a machinist. Shortly thereafter,





though, Rasmussen's failing health required that he find some help, and he asked Former to watch the pipe shop on Saturdays. So Former was able to maintain his relationship to some extent with the pipe trade.

About that time another pipemaker, Sven Knudsen, brother of pipemaker Teddy Knudsen, left his pipecarving job with W.Ø. Larsen to start his own pipe factory, and Former began working with him part time while retaining his machinist job. His tenure with Knudsen ended, however, with Former's mandatory military service at age 20.

After his 16 months in the military, he found himself once again in Copenhagen and looking for work. "I have the perfect job for you," said his friend, Poul Rasmussen. "There is a job opening at W.Ø. Larsen; you can make pipes there."

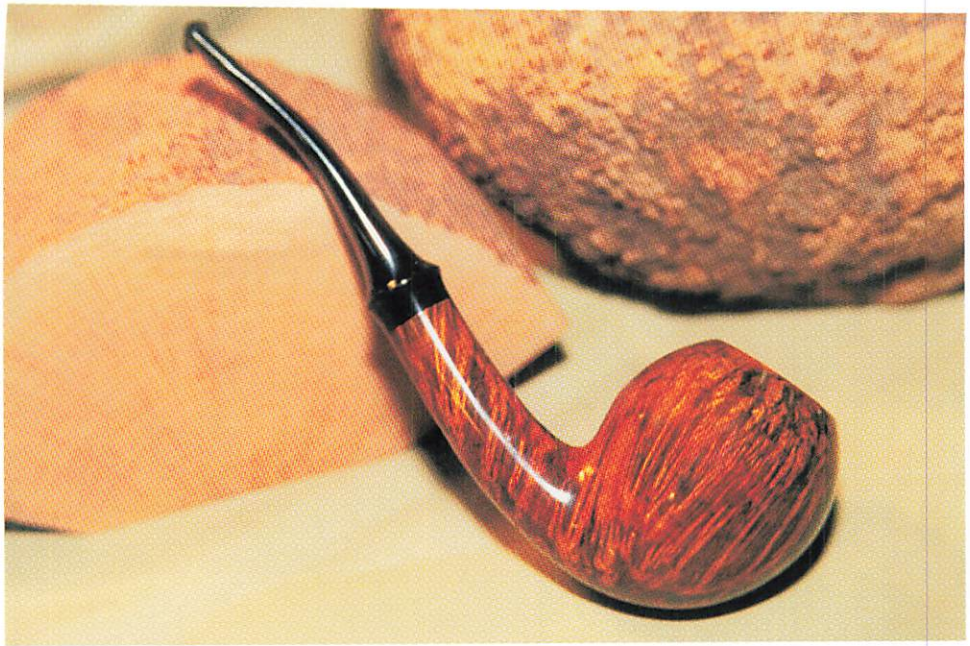
"Will you help me to learn to make pipes at last, then?" asked Former.

"You already know how," said Rasmussen. "I know you can. Look, take that block of briar, take it over to the turning machine and make a pipe." Former did as his friend asked. In half an hour he had roughed out a respectable pipe.

Rasmussen approved. He picked up the telephone and called Sven Bang (the same man who would later start S. Bang pipes) who was the factory manager with Larsen. Rasmussen told Bang, "I have the pipemaker you need." He said that Bang should hire Former, that this young man was a remarkable carver.

Bang needed convincing, though. He told Former to make eight pipes in eight specific W.Ø. Larsen shapes, "and that he could judge whether to hire me by looking at those," says Former. This was important; this was a legitimate audition, and Former took it seriously. So he called Sven Knudsen to ask if he could use his shop to make some pipes. Knudsen had not only worked for years with W.Ø. Larsen, but had been the first carver hired by the company. He invited Former to stay the weekend at his shop to make the pipes he needed. The pipes that came out of that concentrated effort were acceptable. On Monday Former was hired at W.Ø. Larsen. It was 1962. He was 21 years old, and he was now a professional pipemaker.

His education continued at an accelerated rate during his first year with W.Ø. Larsen. An order came in from the United States for 80 pipes. That was a huge order, and it needed to be filled quickly. Former worked diligently, getting advice when necessary from his friend Knudsen, who also did the sandblasting at that time for W.Ø. Larsen in his shop. "Sven knew the Larsen models exactly," says Former, "and he was able to show me how to make pipes exactly according to the catalog shapes." It is not easy to



hand-make pipes to that degree of accuracy, but the exercise sharpened Former's skills.

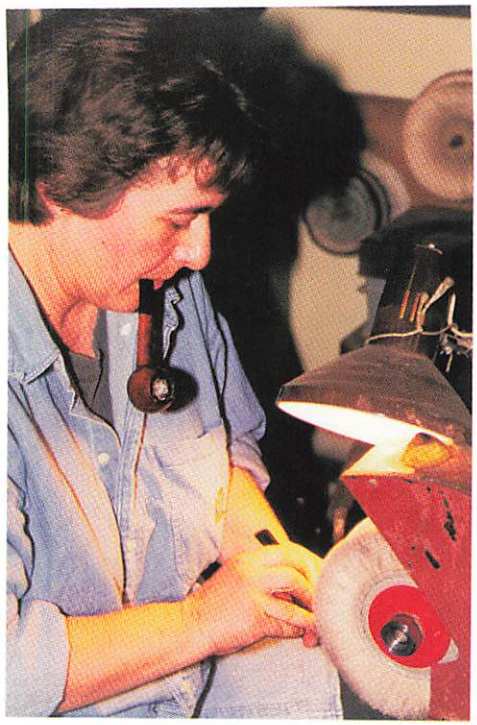
He worked for W.Ø. Larsen for 10 years, and in that time advanced to supervisor of the factory with 19 carvers, including Teddy Knudsen and Tonni Nielsen, both of whom have become pipemakers with worldwide reputations. He was responsible for checking the quality of each pipe made, training new carvers and making and grading pipes. He had also set up a workshop in his home, so that he could develop new shapes on the weekends and therefore not diminish production time during the week.

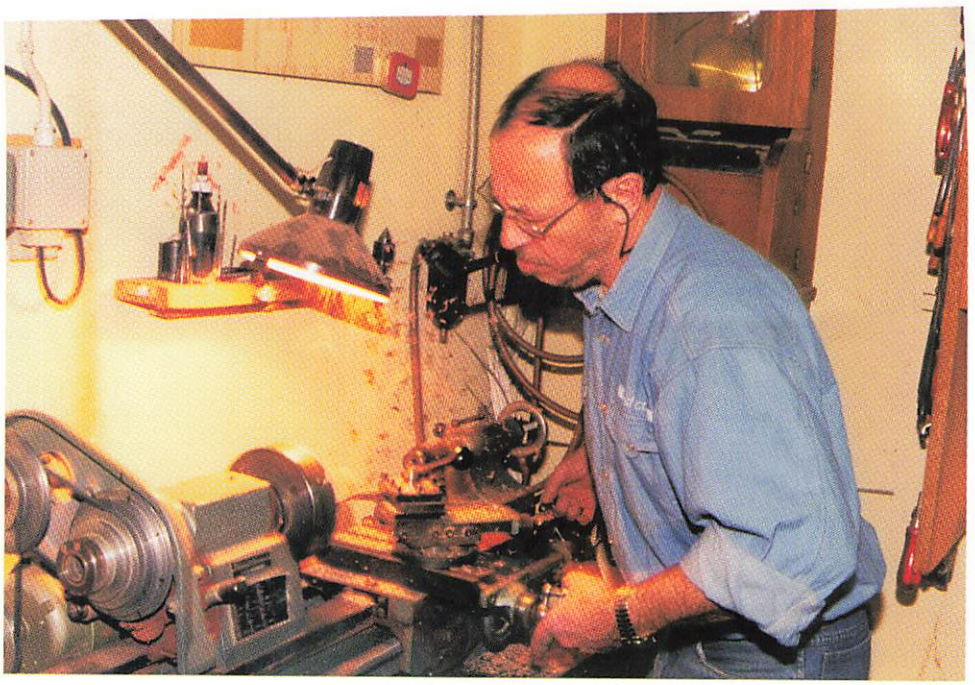
Pipemakers Emil Chonowitsch and Jess Chonowitsch at that time were buried with pipe orders from their Japanese importer. Unable to keep up with those orders, Emil Chonowitsch approached Former to see if he might be willing to make some pipes to help fill the Japanese demand for high-grade Danish pipes. Former made a few in his home workshop, and they were very well received. He agreed to make 15 pipes a month for Japan. When the Japanese demand grew, he left the employ of W.Ø. Larsen to make his own pipes under his own name.

Japanese demand kept him busy. But soon German pipe shops learned that he was making his own pipes, and German demand grew. Within three years Former was working to capacity and unable to accept more orders.

In 1986 an interesting opportunity arose. "A businessman asked me to go to Switzerland and modernize the old Bru-Bu pipe factory to develop a new, high-grade pipe," says Former. He went, and as result of the project, Bentley pipes were born in 1987. Designed by Former, non-filter Bentley pipes were sold in Switzerland while filter-fitted Bentleys were marketed very successfully in Germany. Indeed, so popular were these pipes in Germany that the factory was moved to Hamburg in 1991. The non-filter pipes for the Swiss market were discontinued and the entire production was geared to German demand.

Former met his wife, Daniela, while building the Bentley name in Switzerland. In 1997, the couple decided to purchase the factory machinery and move to Denmark, where they now reside and where they operate a pipe





Daniela and Hans Nielsen (Former) are both skilled pipemakers and experienced pipe smokers.

factory that makes 1,400 to 1,500 Bentley pipes a year as well as 400 to 500 Former pipes.

Daniela is a skilled pipecarver, too. And a pipe smoker. Her skills are concentrated on the Bentley pipes, which are available in the U.S. as well as Germany. For the past few years, Bentleys have been available as filter pipes exclusively, but this year there is to be a change so that both filter and non-filter versions are available. "Non-filter pipes are essential for the American market," says Former. "Bentley is a very good pipe, and more people in America would try them if they could get non-filter pipes." Bentleys come in specific shapes, are numbered accordingly, and are fitted with acrylic stems. The shapes are Former-designed, and as such represent beautifully classic Danish design at a very reasonable cost.

Former pipes are more individual. "I like making Formers better," says Former. "They are more relaxing. More creativity is needed. You aren't required to make each pipe fit a particular catalog shape—you can let each pipe come out according to its personality."

And Former pipes have lots of personality. The briar is hand chosen, well aged and represents the finest grade available. While the Bentley pipes are shaped on fraising machines according to specific models, Formers are never fraised. Lovingly hand-shaped, each Former is meticulously drilled and engineered for optimum smoking quality. Various decorative materials may be used, including silver, wood and horn. Acrylic stem material is sometimes used; sometimes high-grade German vulcanite is deemed better for a particular pipe. The effects are subtle, tasteful and invariably appropriate to the design.

Former's four decades of experience is evident in the quality of each of these pipes. Innovative design, extraordinary finish and detailed engineering guarantee a remarkable smoking experience. Former is proud and confident of his work. "Each pipe is the best that I am capable of," he says. That is no small guarantee, considering the talent and experience of this craftsman. "They are as good as any in the world." ***P&T***

Nomenclature

All Former pipes are stamped FORMER and MADE IN DENMARK.

The two categories of Former pipes are HANDMADE and FREEHAND, and the pipes are stamped with one designation or the other. (Handmades are more classically shaped pipes, turned on machines. Freehands are entirely handmade).

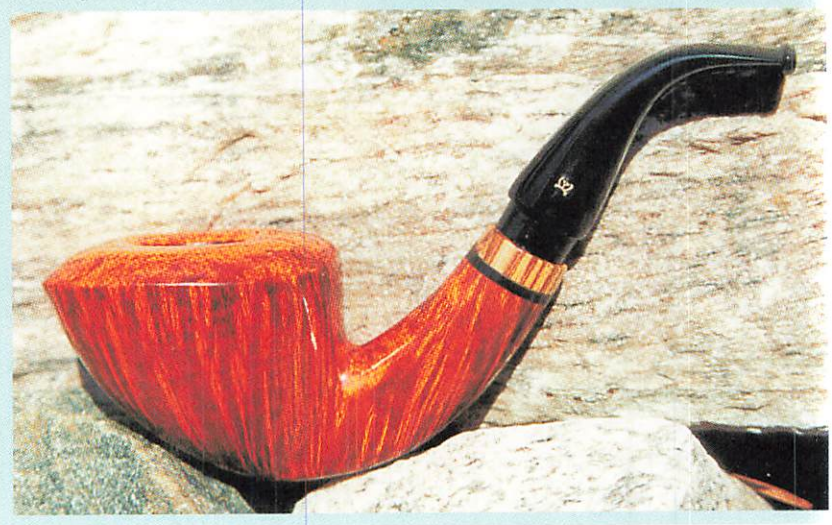
There is no accurate way to date Former pipes. However, pipes made before 1986 are stamped Former in script, while post-1986 pipes have FORMER in capital block letters.

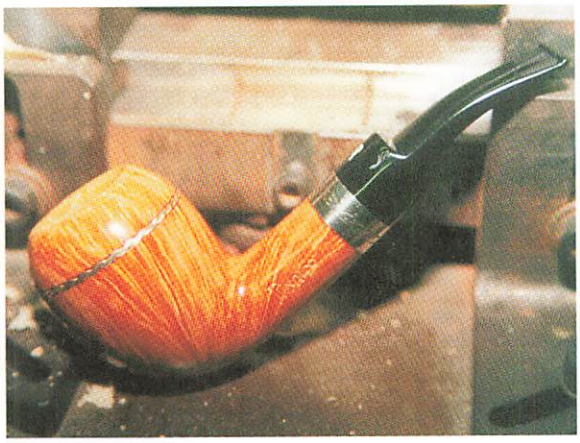
Nording pipes

With a new U.S. distributor, James B. Russell, and a subsequent higher profile in retail shops, Nording pipes are now more readily available in a terrific variety of styles and grades. Pipes from the Hunter series, such as the ones pictured here, are just a few of the styles available at fine retail shops everywhere.

Karl Erik pipes

Karl Erik stopped exporting his pipes to the U.S. market in 1987, when interest in pipes seemed to him to have waned beyond a point necessary for successful marketing. But now that pipes are popular once again, and the U.S. market is especially eager for Danish styles, these highly regarded pipes are once again being distributed, now by James Norman Ltd. Available in many grades and styles at fine tobacco shops everywhere.



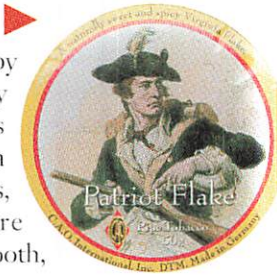


Rinaldo pipes

These fine Italian pipes from brothers Elio and Guido Rinaldo are available in prices from $185 and higher. Extraordinary silver work graces many of the pipes, and fine smoking quality is standard. Rinaldo pipes are distributed by Monjure International and available at shops nationwide.

Patriot Flake

New this year from Dan Tobacco and distributed by C.A.O. International, Patriot Flake is a sweet and spicy Virginia Flake that will delight any smoker who enjoys the clean and flavorful characteristics of fine Virginia tobacco. For those who collect and age fine tobaccos, this is a blend that will become more and more enjoyable with the passage of time, though it is smooth, cool and flavorful right now.

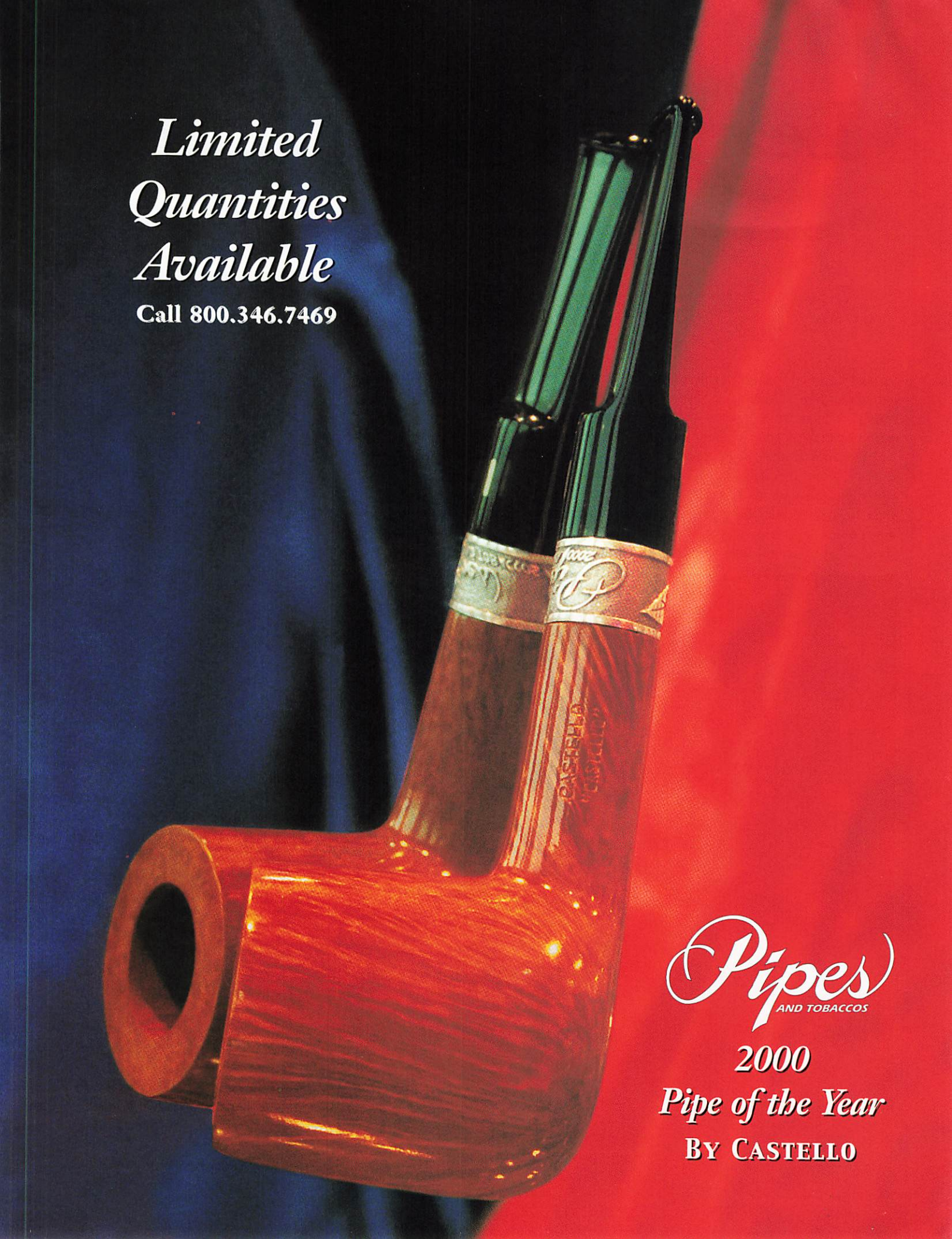


Davidoff pipes

With distinctive mouthpieces and uncompromising smoking characteristics, Davidoff pipes are known for beauty, balance and comfort. Available nationwide and distributed by Davidoff of Geneva.

Domina 2000

The Domina 2000 is a continuation of Ser Jacopo's Pipe of the Year series, which began in 1996. Limited to only 333 pieces, each pipe is numbered and adorned with a unique, deeply etched sterling silver band. Domina pipes are available in Rustic, Sandblast, Ruby, Smooth Walnut and Natural Smooth finishes, and in rare instances are available in Gem Series grades. Available nationwide and distributed by Marble Arch.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Learned Craftsmanship

Fluidity of design is a hallmark of this Pennsylvania pipemaker

by Chuck Stanion

Samuel Learned has a sophisticated manner about him. Urbane, confident, polished, articulate…more what you would expect of a lawyer than a pipemaker.

But maybe that is because he *is* a lawyer. More precisely, he is a patent, copyright and trademark attorney, and as such he has decades of experience with innovations. He goes to court to argue about what does and does not constitute originality, and he can certainly recognize it when he sees it. So when he decided to exercise his own inventiveness by carving pipes, it is not hard to understand that these pipes would be some of the most distinctive in America.

Learned's pipes are easy to recognize, even from across a room, because they really are unlike any other pipes. As we so often joke, a pipe is just a piece of wood with two holes in it—what can possibly be done to modify that? But as we see in every issue of this magazine, a very great deal can be done. It's true that every carver has an individual style, but Sam Learned's pipes have a unique, streamlined character that is all their own.

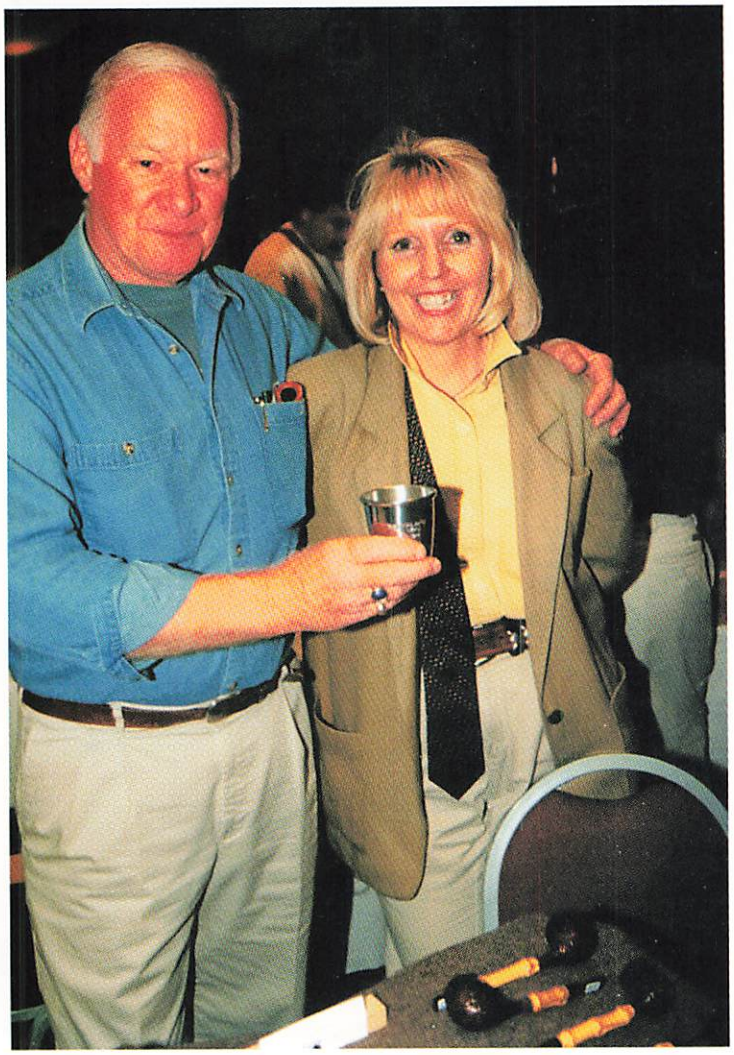
Even the very first pipe he ever made (which he still has) exhibits a sophistication unusual for a beginner. That was only six years ago. "It was sort of a bolt of lightning," says Learned. "I just woke up one morning knowing I wanted to learn to make pipes." He had purchased a couple of pipes from a pipemaker in Hanover, Pennsylvania, named Jim Margroum, who works under the name "Mr. Groum" for his pipecarving. "Hanover is only 20 miles from here," says Learned from his workshop in York, Pennsylvania. "I called and told him I'd like him to teach me to make pipes. He said lots of people want to make pipes; why should I teach you." Learned is a convincing man, and does not make decisions lightly. That must have become quickly apparent to Margroum. "We talked for a while, and I arranged to meet with him, and he finally accepted me as an apprentice for one year."

Margroum maintained some doubts about Learned's resolve for a time, though. "He had some preconceived notions about lawyers, as we all do, including myself," says Learned. "I think it amazed him that I hung in that long."

Learned's first pipe was a challenging project. Margroum demonstrated the steps first, with Learned watching each detail, then said, "Now you try it."

"It was the Socratic method," says Learned. "You know: figure it out yourself." He worked the pipe as best he could, and after a week he handed it over to his teacher.

Margroum turned the finished piece over in his hands, examining every feature. "You know, Sam," he said, "you have created a terrific burden for yourself. I've not even mentioned how to read grain, but you have a perfect straight grain here. You've cut the wood exactly as you should, everything is aligned, it has beautiful balance. Very nice work." He handed the pipe back.



Samuel and Colleen Learned, after the Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers awarded Learned Best Pipemaker at their Exposition.

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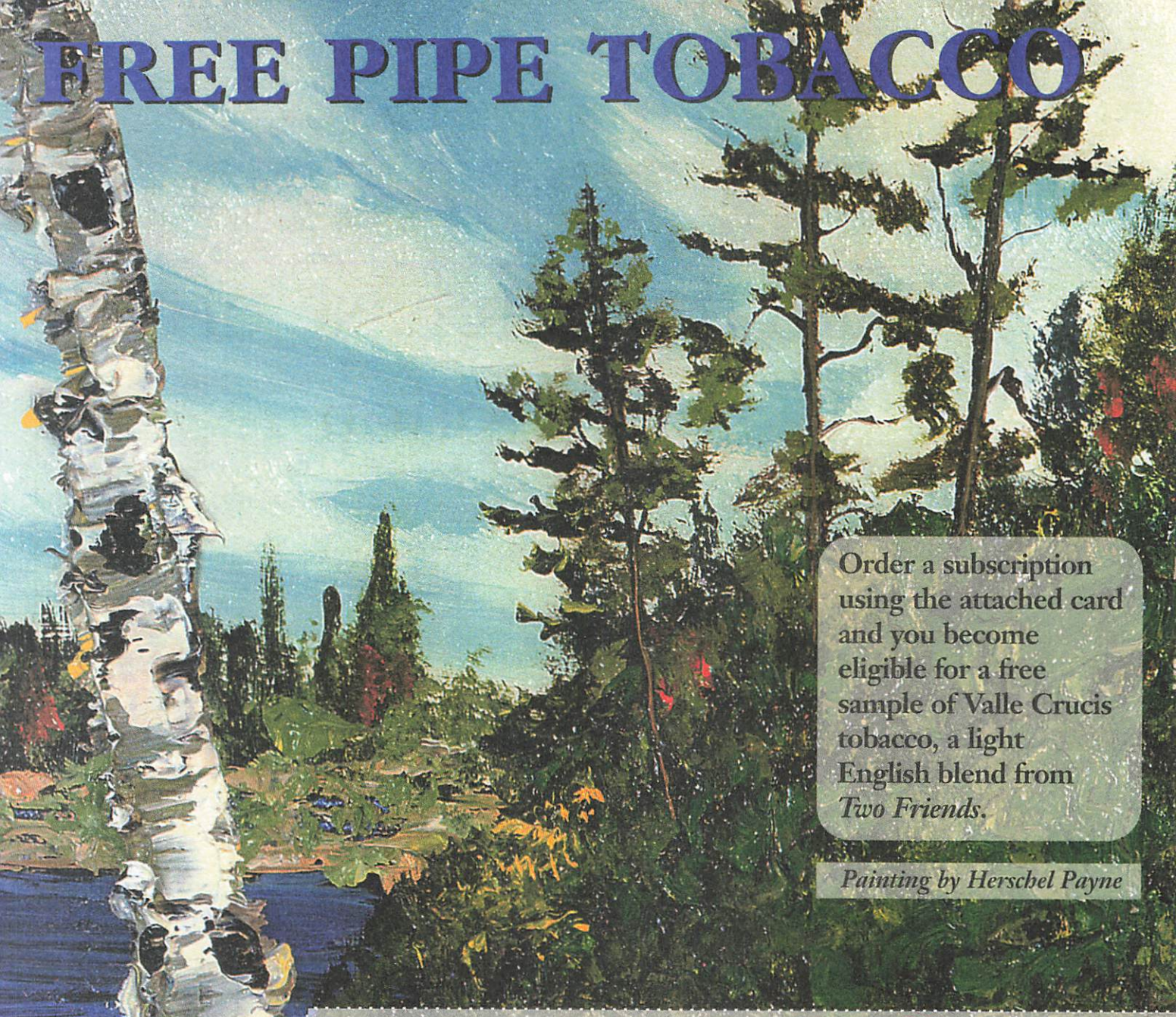

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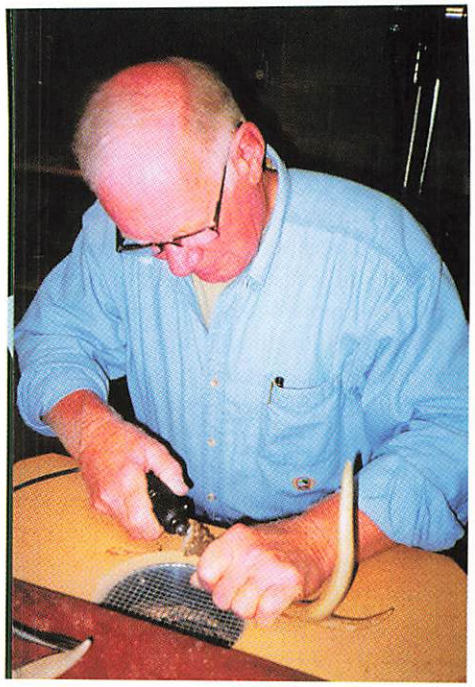
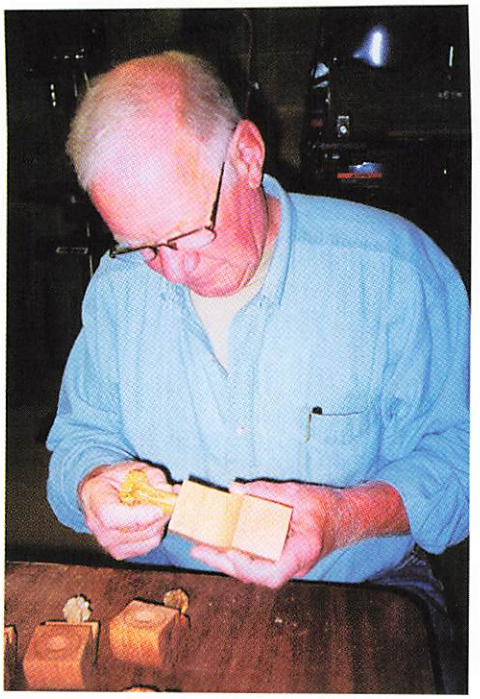
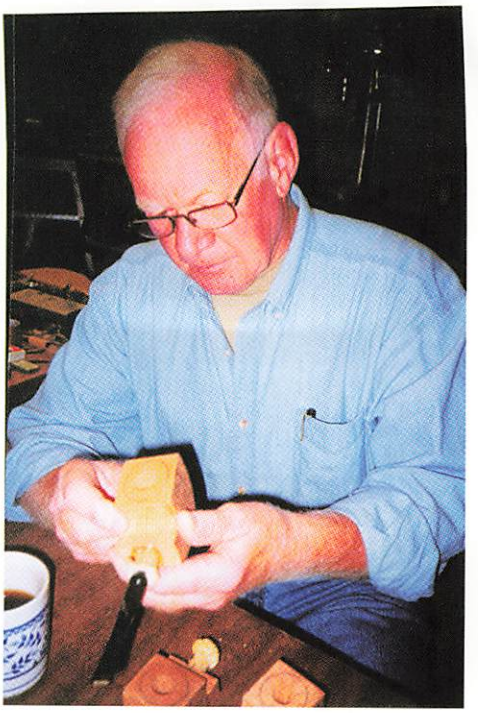
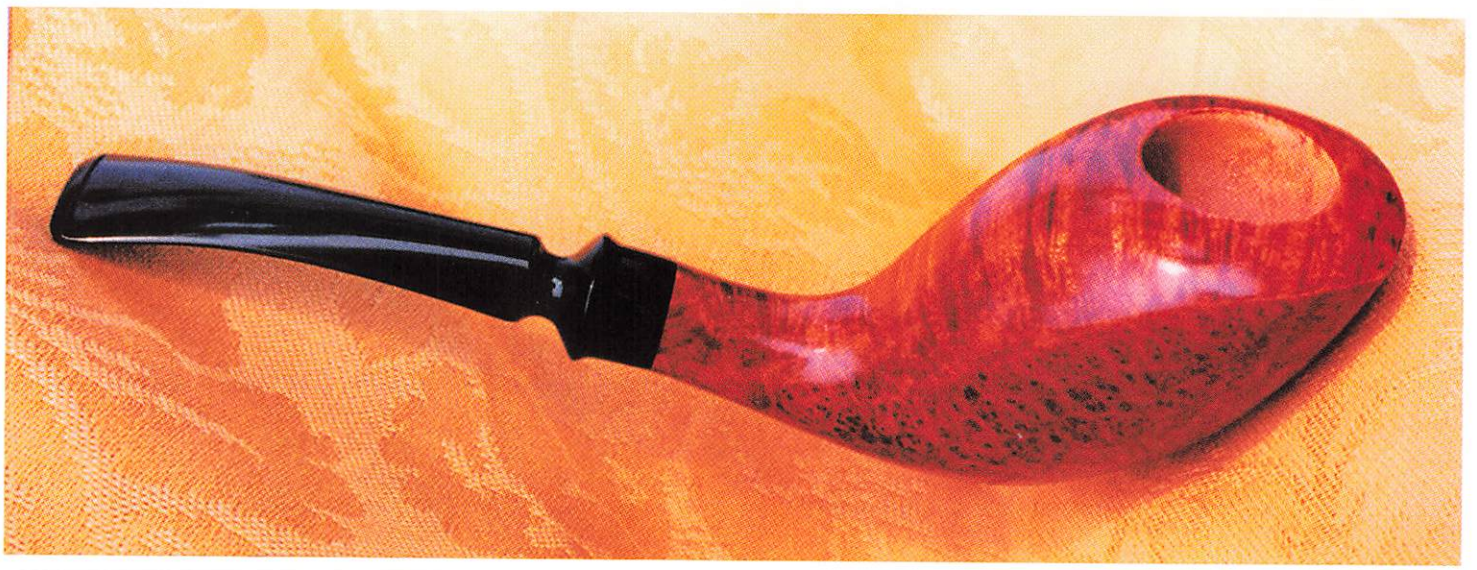
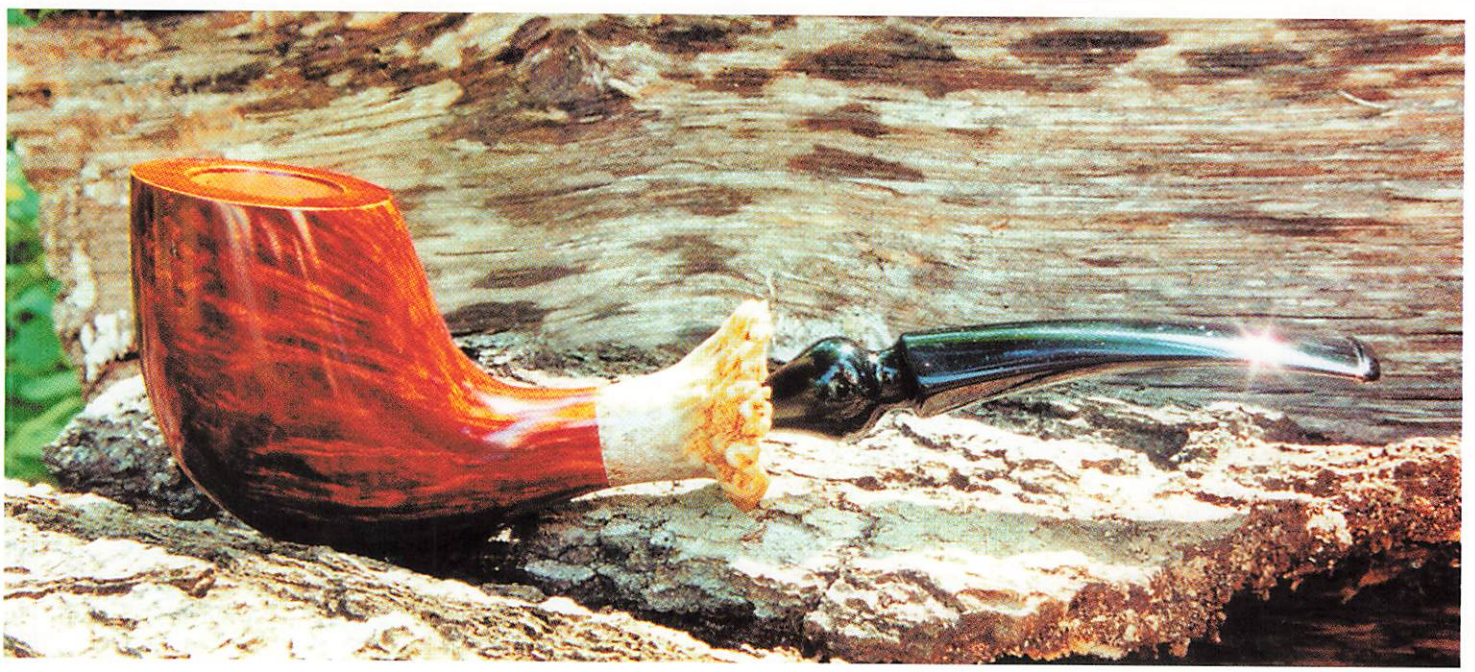










"But I bet it is six months before you make another pipe of that level of quality."

And he was right. It took a long time, but Learned absorbed an enormous amount about making pipes on the way.

After a few months of apprenticeship, Margroum said, "Sam, I've taught you all that I can. You're done." But Learned wasn't ready to leave. "I told him the deal was for one year," he says, "and that he was stuck with me for the duration." He credits that extra time with helping him amplify his skills. "As my skills evolved," he says, "I'd still run into a situation and have to ask Jim how he would handle it. And he would invariably take the pipe at whatever stage of completion it was and very deftly solve the problem. It never ceased to amaze me how he could do that."

Learned has enormous respect for Margroum. "His style is totally different from mine," he says, "but it was from him that I learned the technical methods and techniques of making a pipe, and then evolved into my own style. Jim Margroum imparted that to me."

But eventually Learned moved on in his own independent direction with his pipemaking. "I was looking forward to the day when I would quit being a lawyer." He pauses. "Well, I guess you never really quit being a lawyer. You carry that to the grave. But I was looking forward to switching gears. And the most surprising thing to me was that I seemed to have an aptitude for carving pipes."

His timing was excellent, too, in an ironic way. Sales of pipes and pipe tobacco were on a downward trend at that time. But for Learned, that just meant there was plenty of potential energy stored. "I learned as a lawyer," he says, "that when you're on top and you've got a slam dunk winning case that you can't possibly lose, guess what? And when you're at the very bottom with two chances—slim and none—you have only one way to go: up. And that's how I assessed pipemaking. If I ever did anything with a modicum of brilliance to it, it was learning to make pipes before the current resurgence."

That is a modest statement, considering the brilliant work he has accomplished with his pipes. Learned carves a multitude of shapes, but if he may be said to have a signature pipe, it is his Hunter Series, which has decorative deer antler where the stem meets the pipe. The difficulty with including antler in pipe design involves the inherent problem of joining two different materials in a smooth and flawless marriage. "Briar and antler are natural substances with their own characteristics and their own working dimensions," says Learned. "Either by itself is no more difficult to work than the other, but when you put the two together, difficulty doesn't just multiply, it increases exponentially." One of his self-enforced requirements for this sort of craftsmanship is that the joint between briar and antler be imperceptible to the touch.

Learned selects an appropriately shaped piece of antler for whatever pipe design he is working on, except when he is working with an exceptional specimen of antler. "Every once in a while," he says, "I'll happen across some antique red stag antler, which is the type of antler you see on antique Tyrolean pipes with the cherry stems. Quite rare, and very expensive when you can find it." Such a pair of red stag antlers sat in Learned's shop for 18 months, while he waited for the right inspiration to use them. "I had to wait for the time to be right, for the planets to align while the moon was in the right phase," says Learned with a laugh. "In that case it was the antler that dictated what the pipe was going to be. But usually it is the other way around."

Corsican and Greek plateau briar are predominantly used for Learned pipes. Learned air-dries the wood in crates in his shop, then puts it in racks for further drying on a rotational basis. When properly dried, the briar is cut to different particular rough shapes and the bowl and draft holes are drilled. "Then it will sit in my shop for three to six months before I even make the pipe," says Learned. "That additional wait helps balance the moisture content of the wood with the ambient atmosphere in my shop. I also use humidifiers in my shop to keep the atmospheric environment reasonably constant. And I think I've done that quite successfully, because when I fit a stem to a briar shank, I no longer have the problem of going down the next day and running my hand down the shank and feeling the stem, where the juncture meets. It's not expanding."

A full-time practicing attorney has only so much free time, and even though Learned spends almost every free moment making pipes, he is able to produce only 250 to 300 pipes per year, all of which sell quickly. About half of his sales are transacted at pipe shows. He attends every show he can, for several reasons. "I enjoy and learn from

my interaction with customers," he says. "It's important to know what the smoker wants in a pipe. But I also learn from the other pipemakers who attend shows." Learned appreciates that this industry has no cutthroat, secretive, competitive dynamic between different craftsmen. Carvers tend to be free and open with their techniques, and willing to share their experience to the benefit of everyone, especially the people who buy the pipes.

But beyond that, he simply enjoys pipe smokers. "They are all friendly," he says. "They are all honest. Pipe people are really, really nice people. And they appreciate what you do. They say thank-you. As a lawyer, you can provide great results for a client, and they say, 'Is that all there is?' Maybe you've saved them from jail, or saved their life savings from going down the tubes, but all you get is, "Is that all there is?' But you don't get that with pipe people."

Another advantage of pipe shows for Learned is that he usually travels to them with his wife, Colleen, who is a vibrant contributor to the business, as well as a charismatic participant at shows who is immensely popular with attendees. "She has been with me from the very beginning," says Learned. "She is my most valued supporter, my kindest critic and my star and stunning salesperson." Colleen also maintains Learned's Web site (*http://members.aol.com/SamTobias/index.html*) as well as offers valuable marketing advice. The "Mule" line of Learned pipes, for example, was her idea. It is a successful campaign aimed at producing repeat customers. "Sam," she said, "you've got to get your pipes into people's hands, so you've got to have a pipe that's under a hundred dollars." So Learned came up with the Mules to fill that need.

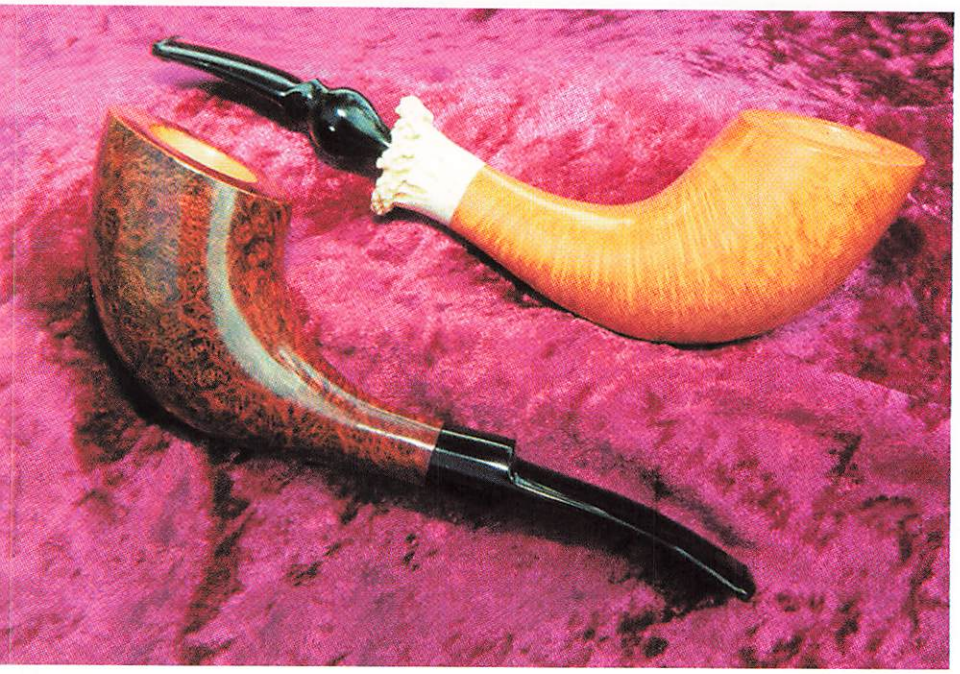
"Now that's a $90 pipe," says Learned, "and you're not going to get a gangbusters piece of wood for $90. But there is absolutely nothing wrong with them; they just don't exhibit stunning grain. They are at the same technical level as all my pipes, but quite frankly they are a marketing tool. Ninety dollars is a giveaway; I'm not making any money on that. But if you smoke one of them and like it, you'll come back and maybe buy a $300 or $400 pipe. And that has happened. The program works."

The three grades of pipe offered by Learned are the Star, the Crescent and the Sun, distinguished from one another not by engineering or technical difficulty, but by the quality of the briar alone. "The grain pattern and its consistency around the circumference of the bowl," says Learned, "is basically what makes the difference between a $250 pipe and a $400 pipe." There is no less work involved in a lower priced pipe. Each one takes Learned about 12 to 15 hours to make, including an average of two to three hours customizing the stem.

"Pipes are very tactile instruments," says Learned. Obviously, then, the finish must be excellent, and he has worked hard to perfect it. "A pipe has to feel right in the hand. "If I were to characterize any overriding design philosophy of my pipes, I would say that the comfortable feel of the piece is always essential. That, and a fluidity of design. I like flowing, unbroken lines in my pipes. I think the horns represent that philosophy especially well."

Many people might think it odd that a man with a successful law practice would want to move away from that profession in favor of pipecarving. That Learned is so willing to move in new directions demonstrates that he is not the sort of man to let circumstances dictate his life. "There's a man I've always admired," he says. "Louis Antoine de Bougainville. He had a stunning career as an Army officer during the French and Indian wars. Then he switched from the Army to the Navy, and had a stunning career as a naval officer. He discovered the Bougainville Islands. Then he had another stunning career as a botanist—the Bougainville flower is named after him. The guy was incredible. Well, I am on my Bougainville trek. I've been an Army officer, a chemical engineer, a lawyer, and now I'm a pipemaker. I've got a few more careers to go to catch up."

For now, however, Learned is content to pursue his carving career, and his success is obvious. *P&T*



Nomenclature

Learned pipes made in 1996 were marked with the intertwined SL logo. In 1997, the number 97 was added to that logo to indicate the year. From Jan.1, 1998, to the present, all pipes include the *SL* logo and the year of manufacture, as well as a grade stamp. There are some special edition Hunter series pipes that include all of the standard nomenclature, but have an additional stamp to indicate the individual number of the pipe within the series.

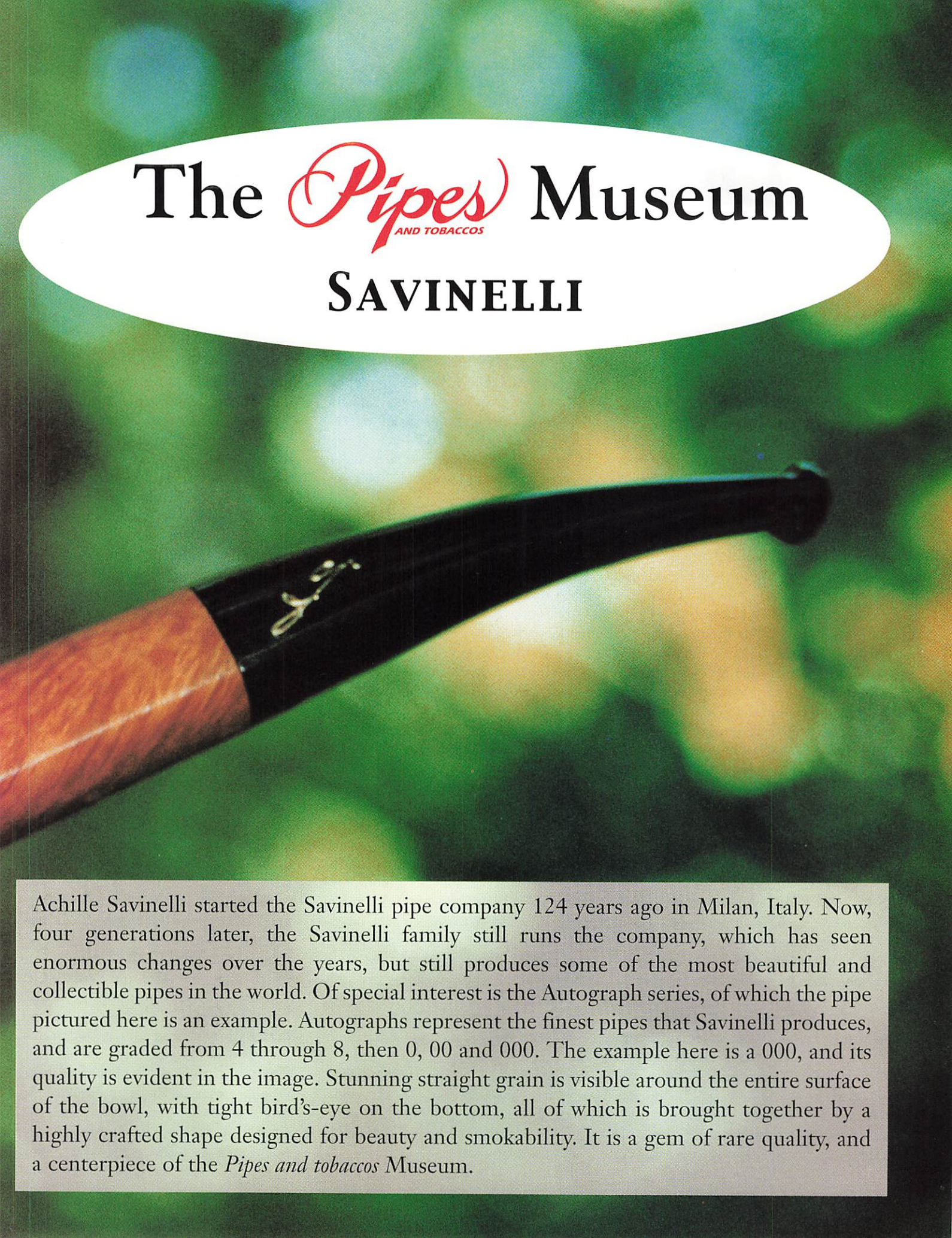
Grades:

Sun designates "Premium" in quality of wood, grain and executed design, being the highest grade.

Crescent Moon designates "Superior" in quality of wood, grain and executed design, being the intermediate grade.

Star designates "Select" in quality of wood, grain and executed design, being the standard grade.

For additional information or to order pipes, contact Samuel Learned at 717.846.9290; e-mail *SamTobias@aol.com* or visit *members.aol.com/SamTobias/index.html.*



The *Pipes* AND TOBACCOS Museum

SAVINELLI

Achille Savinelli started the Savinelli pipe company 124 years ago in Milan, Italy. Now, four generations later, the Savinelli family still runs the company, which has seen enormous changes over the years, but still produces some of the most beautiful and collectible pipes in the world. Of special interest is the Autograph series, of which the pipe pictured here is an example. Autographs represent the finest pipes that Savinelli produces, and are graded from 4 through 8, then 0, 00 and 000. The example here is a 000, and its quality is evident in the image. Stunning straight grain is visible around the entire surface of the bowl, with tight bird's-eye on the bottom, all of which is brought together by a highly crafted shape designed for beauty and smokability. It is a gem of rare quality, and a centerpiece of the *Pipes and tobaccos* Museum.

One Chance in Ten

Experimental medicine and pipe smoking meet in this story of personal struggle

by Regis McCafferty

Alexander Cahill was standing in front of his pipe cabinet staring through the glass at 30 or more pipes lined up in three rows, one above the other. He was thinking again of Janet, his wife, who'd died two years earlier in an auto accident. Just a pointless damned thing, he thought; a foggy, rainy night and another woman who didn't see a stop sign. He missed her warmth, humor, love and insight more than ever now. He opened the cabinet door, started to select an old Charatan, changed his mind and picked up a Dunhill—a Group 4 Shell Briar and an old friend. Below the cabinet was a small oak table with four glass humidors of tobacco. He selected the one with stoved Virginia flake, removed the lid, dipped in the pipe, and expertly filled the bowl. Picking up a box of wood matches, he struck one and held it over the bowl, drawing in short pulls as he moved the match counterclockwise above the tobacco. He tamped with his finger, then relit before closing the cabinet door and replacing the lid on the humidor.

Cahill was in his late 50s, of average height and build, with brown eyes, gray hair and mustache, and ruddy complexion from many hours outdoors. He enjoyed walking in all kinds of weather, and backpacking when he could spare a few days to get away, which wasn't as often as he liked. The last time had been about six weeks ago when he hiked a short section of the Appalachian Trail from Duncannon to Waynesboro, Pennsylvania. That was three weeks before he visited his doctor, who sent him to another doctor, a specialist who called in another specialist, who called in... In all there had been six. At least they were in agreement: His time was running out. It might be that it would run out slower if he agreed to subject himself to a series of debilitating treatments that would rob him of his vitality, appearance and self-respect. And after all that, they gave him one chance in 10 of adding another few years to what could be a miserable existence.

He laughed as he walked to the liquor cabinet, thinking of the one specialist who suggested he might give up smoking. He'd asked if his problem was related, and when told no, asked why he should give up one of the consummate pleasures in his life for more than 40 years. The doctor had no answer. But even if there had been a connection, he wouldn't have quit. Good pipes and tobacco had contributed to the quality of his life, as he defined it, and he wasn't about to give them up.

He poured himself a small glass of sherry and took a sip. It was a perfect companion to the tobacco and provided sweet contrast to the spicy-tart taste of the blend. Settling into an old leather armchair, he surveyed the room. It was a small bedroom that he'd turned into a den, with overflowing bookshelves, a computer, shelves of tobacco, and a half dozen pipe racks in addition to the cabinet on the wall. Hell, he had pipes stashed all over the house. A rack in the living room, another in the bedroom, and a large ashtray with four or more in the kitchen. Then, of course, there was the pipe bag he kept in the car. Must be well over a hundred, he thought, but he'd lost track. He used to keep a record but hadn't for several years. Aloud, he said, "I should give some of them away... " He was going to say more, but his voice caught and all he said was, "Damn!"

He had promised to call his doctor by four o'clock with his decision. It was nearly two and he hadn't made up his mind. Or maybe he had... If your health is good at 90, life is too short. If you're a vegetable at 40, it's too long. "Kinda sums it up," he said aloud, and then returned to thinking of his predicament. The real conflict was that he didn't feel bad. Some aches and pains, maybe, but a brisk walk seemed to relieve them, at least for a while. Hell, he'd hiked 50 miles of pretty rough terrain without any problems. He did seem to tire a bit easier than before, but attributed that to his age. Still, the lack of energy hung on for a couple of weeks after he'd returned, which is why he'd visited his doctor.

His thoughts returned to his pipes. He hadn't counted lately, but thought about 30 of them were old Charatans. Some of his pipes he would give to his son, but when he thought Charatan, he thought of Charlie Bennett in upstate New York. Charlie didn't have a large collection, perhaps 40 pipes, but his favorites were Charatans and they made up half the pipes he owned. The previous year, when they'd been together for a week of fly-fishing, Alex had brought several Charatans with him; one, a Coronation straight grain, just to tease Charlie. Charlie had offered him a lot of money for the pipe, but Alex told him, "I'll let you smoke it, but you can't buy it." Charlie promptly took him up on his offer and loaded the pipe from a tin of Durbar that Alex pulled from his beat-up old Battenkill carryall bag. They spent the evening sitting on the front porch of the cabin, smoking pipes, sipping coffee and occasionally talking, but mostly just listening to the sounds of the surrounding woods. In a lifetime, it couldn't get any better than that. ▶

Alex reached for the phone and dialed Charlie's number. It rang four times before the answering machine cut in. "This is Charlie. I'm drunk, fishing, chasing women, or making some other contribution to mankind. In any case, leave a message." At the beep, Alex said, "This is Alex, you old liar. You hardly drink, the last woman you chased caught you, and your fishing is done till next year. That leaves helping mankind, so I expect you're volunteering at Sloan. Call me. Let's talk Charatan."

That ought to get his attention, he thought and laughed out loud. Charlie was a retired university professor who occasionally volunteered at Sloan-Kettering Institute, and a small clinic located not far from his home in the Adirondacks. His daughter lived in New York City, and when he visited her, he would put in a few hours at Sloan. Charlie's wife died of cancer, but had managed to live almost 10 years, relatively trouble free, after they discovered it. If Charlie was at his daughter's, he might not be back for a few days. Well, no matter, he thought. He'd made up his mind and now reached for the phone.

"Hi. This is Alex Cahill. Can Doctor Hamilton come to the phone?"

"One moment please."

Without a click to announce him, Dave Hamilton said, "Hello Alex, how are you feeling?"

Typical doctor question, thought Alex. "Hell, I feel fine. How 'bout you?" Turnabout is fair play.

"Fine, fine..." There was a slight, but noticeable, pause. "I expect you're calling about the how and when to set up the surgery and treatment plan we discussed. I think I have most of the details in front of me here."

"Well, yes, that's why I called..." His turn to pause. "I've decided..." Another pause. "I've decided not to have surgery or the treatments." There, he'd said it. Silence... "Are you there, Dave?" When Dr. Hamilton finally spoke, it was in a soft and gentle voice.

"You sure, Alex?"

"Yes, I'm sure."

There was another pause and a sigh. Then, "The choice is yours, of course, and I'm not all that certain I wouldn't arrive at the same conclusion, given the circumstance, but the specialists did say they felt they could give you a couple of years or more."

"I've been debating quality versus quantity for over a week, Doc."

"Then I guess that says it all, Alex."

"Yeah, for me it does."

"Well, I'm not going to argue with you, we've been friends too long. We did discuss progression, though. As time passes, you're going to need medication. I can help you there. You'll need stronger doses later, and eventually, you'll need hospital care."

"I don't think so, Dave. Medication, yes, but I don't think hospitalization." Euthanasia or suicide was never discussed in previous conversations they'd had, but it was there, nonetheless. He wasn't going to linger in a hospital hooked up to machines and tubes.

"I understand. I'd like to see you in my office in a couple of weeks. I'll have my nurse make an appointment for you. In the meantime, if you need anything, just call and I'll prescribe something for you."

"Thanks, Dave."

"Take care, Alex."

He picked up his pipe, noticed he'd smoked it to the bottom and tapped the dottle into an ashtray. He walked over to the table under the pipe cabinet, opened a drawer, took a polishing cloth out of a plastic bag and wiped the pipe. Opening the cabinet, he replaced the Dunhill and took out a large, half-bent Castello Old Antiquari. He chose a rich English tobacco this time, Aperitif, that he'd picked up at the Dunhill shop on his last trip to England. Smiling, he thought it funny that he'd smoke an American stoved Virginia in an English pipe and an English blend in an Italian pipe. "You're a truly international S.O.B." he mumbled aloud. Then the thought struck him that he may never get to England again. Of all the places he'd been in the world, he loved London best, and would spend hours just wandering in the city.

The phone rang.

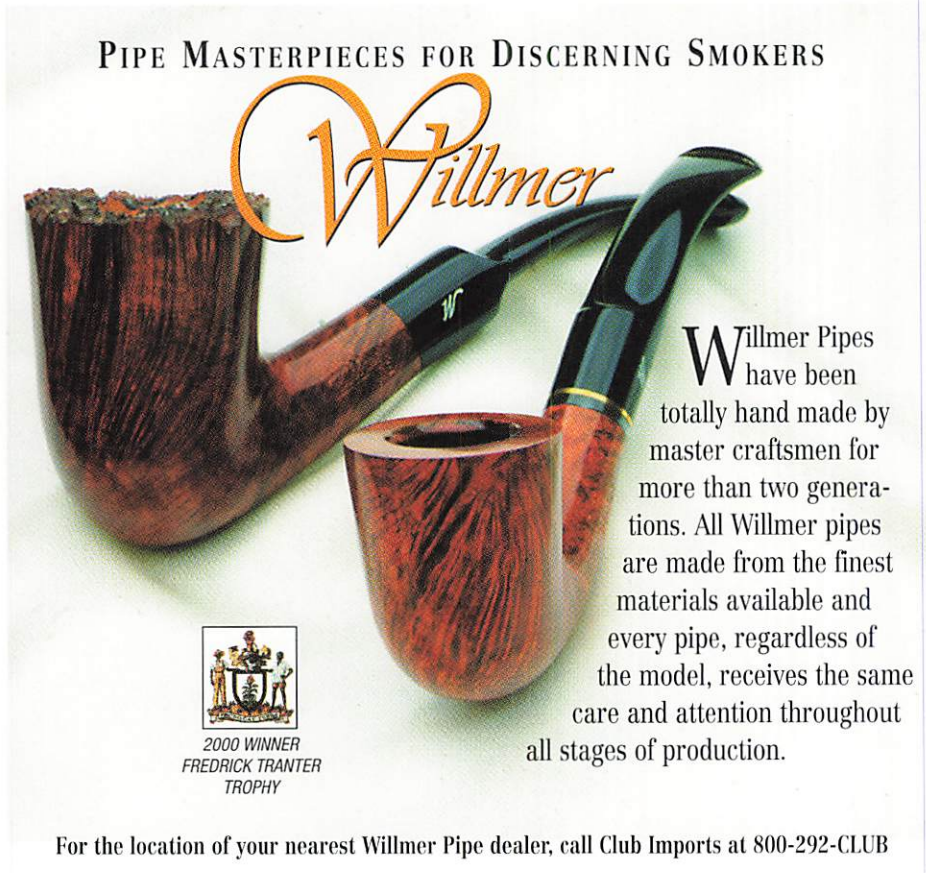
"Hello?"

"What's this crap about Charatans?"

Alex laughed. Typical Charlie, right to the point. "I didn't think I'd hear from you for a few days. Figured you were in New York or some other exotic place."

"Nah. Just out in the shed packing up my fishing gear for the winter. Heard the phone. Figured if it was important, they'd leave a message. Now, what's this about Charatans? You discover a hoard somewhere that someone wants to give away or sell cheap?"

"Give away, actually. Mine."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There was silence on the other end of the line. Then Charlie said, "What's goin' on, Alex?"

Alex thought he'd lie about it. Tell Charlie he'd just got tired looking at the Charatans and decided he'd give them a good home. But he knew it wouldn't work. Charlie would eventually know. Hell, everyone would eventually know.

"Been to see a doctor, Charlie. Six of them, in fact. Seems they're all of one mind, that my fishing, pipe-smoking, whiskey-drinkin' days are numbered."

"Tell me about it." said Charlie. "All of it."

When Alex finished, there was silence.

"Still with me, Charlie?"

"Yeah... I was listening and thinking while you were talking. Tough job for a man who can't walk and chew gum at the same time."

Alex laughed. "Bullshit, Charlie. What were you thinking?"

"I was thinking if I had a bottle of Scotch in the house, I might open the damn thing. But since I don't, I just have to put on a pot of coffee."

Charlie had carried on a passionate affair with Scotch for many years, but as he got older, it became a treat for special occasions. Alex had sent him a bottle of Chivas the previous Christmas but Charlie hadn't opened it till they got together for some fly-fishing in the spring.

"I expect you've had your fill of doctors, but do you remember me talking about Doctor Fourier? The fellow who runs the clinic up here and took care of my wife."

"Yeah... vaguely."

"Well, they gave Margaret a year at best, and then some friend of a friend told her about Doctor Fourier and this clinic. Now, I don't claim he works miracles, and neither does he, but something gave us another 10 good years together. Sure changed our lifestyle, though. She stayed at the clinic for two months and when she came home she'd lost about 15 pounds and looked younger." He laughed. "Can't say as I minded it, though. If I called and asked him to talk with you, would you mind?"

Alex thought for a minute. "No, I guess not. I don't expect it to make any difference, though. The specialists were pretty thorough."

"Well, his first name is Henry. Nice fellow. Just tell him everything you've told me. And he'll probably want the names and phone numbers of your doctors. Are you free to come and visit with me for a few days? He'll want to see you, and the clinic's only 30 miles from here."

"I may come and visit for a few days, regardless of what he says."

"Was goin' to suggest it myself. Now, about those Charatans... "

Before Charlie hung up, they talked about the pipes. Alex told him that when he went to the big pipe and tobacco shop in the sky, he wanted Charlie to have his Charatans and he'd leave a note to that effect attached to his will. The rest of his pipes would go to his son. Charlie didn't want to talk about it and changed the subject to fly-fishing. So Alex, understanding, talked fishing. As if there was some chance for it, they planned a trip for early next summer; maybe Montana, maybe England. Alex had never been fly-fishing in Montana but Charlie had, and Charlie had never been to England. Charlie's last comment was, "Hell, why not do both?" And Alex replied, "Why not? We'll talk about it."

Early the next morning, while having coffee and enjoying his first pipe of the day, the phone rang. Alex sat his cup down, picked up his pipe, and walked to the wall phone.

"Hello?"

"This is Henry Fourier. Charlie tells me you're ill."

Damn! Another Charlie, thought Alex. Doesn't mince words. Then aloud, "Well, that's what the specialists say."

"What do you say?"

"I seem to tire easily, and I've seen all the test reports from the doctors—blood tests, X-rays, cardiograms, ultrasounds. They were pretty thorough. Hard to disagree with them."

"Tissue biopsy?"

"No."

"I'd like to talk to your doctors, primary care physician first. Do you have their numbers?"

Alex had made a list the previous evening and gave him names, specialty field, and phone numbers.

"This is a good group. Not often wrong. Charlie tells me you're a pipe smoker."

Here it comes, thought Alex, the cut 'em off at the pass routine.

"Yes. Almost 40 years."

"Yeah, me too, though not as long. Forty years would mean I started at age six. About 25 for me. Come to think of it, had I known how much pleasure I'd get from it, I might have started at six." ▶

"You're a pipe smoker?" Alex could hardly believe it.

"Yeah. Actually, there are a lot of doctors who smoke pipes. Don't spread it around though. Might piss off the Surgeon General."

Alex laughed. "Well I'll be damned."

"I expect we all will, eventually. I'll call you back later today. Say about five."

Alex started to say good-bye, but Fourier was gone. Without being able to say why, he felt good. Really good! He walked to the window, opened it and looked outside. It was raining; a cold drizzle that brought the distinct autumn scent of wet, fallen leaves. He'd planned on staying indoors, but instead, walked to the closet, lifted out an old waxed cotton jacket and wool bucket hat. He put them on, picked up two pipes and a pouch, slipped them into his pocket, and headed out the door.

He walked for almost two hours, not counting a half hour stop in a coffee shop for a pipe and a cup of coffee. As he walked, his thoughts turned to Janet as they often did, and how they'd met almost 30 years ago. He'd been teaching English at a small liberal arts college and was walking on the Commons, smoking his pipe, when she walked directly into him. She was reading a book. He said "Excuse me!" She said, "What's that wonderful aroma?" And that was the beginning.

They were married late the following spring and honeymooned for three weeks on a driving trip through New England. It was on that trip that Janet worked hard at learning something of pipes and tobacco, and every Christmas afterward had bought Alex a gift from his favorite pipe shop—in cahoots with the shop owner, he was sure, but never asked.

He found that his feet had brought him back home, and now as he walked in the door the phone rang, bringing his thoughts back to the present.

"Hello?"

"Alex?"

"Yes."

"Fourier here. I talked with your doctor and three of the specialists. I tend to agree with their diagnosis."

"I see." Without realizing it, the earlier conversations with Fourier and Charlie had given him some hope. Suppressed hope, maybe, but hope nonetheless.

"I agree with their diagnosis, but not necessarily their prognosis. How soon can you come to the clinic?"

"Whenever you like."

"Tomorrow?"

"Yes. I'll call Charlie this evening. I'll stay there."

"No, you'll stay here. Are you married?"

"No. My wife died a couple of years ago."

"It would be helpful then, if you had a friend you could talk with," said Fourier.

"Charlie?"

"Charlie's a good man. You're good friends?"

"Yeah, fishing buddies for a lot of years."

"I'll call him," said Fourier, "He can meet you here. How have you been feeling?"

"Damned good, to be honest. I'm going to take myself out to dinner this evening, maybe chase some women, and begin training for the Boston Marathon."

"Optimistic son of a bitch, aren't you?"

"Well, maybe I'll forget about dinner."

Fourier laughed. "See you tomorrow."

Alex put the phone down, picked up his jacket and hat, stuffed a large half-bent Ferndown in his pocket and left the house for a walk and dinner. He ate Chinese at a nice restaurant in a nearby mall and finished up with brandy, coffee and a pipe before doing some window-shopping. He took a roundabout way home and after relighting his pipe, phoned Charlie to fill him in on his earlier conversation with the doctor. Charlie said he'd already talked with Dr. Fourier and would meet him at the clinic the following afternoon.

Charlie was waiting for him at the clinic when he arrived and greeted Alex with a bear hug and handshake. "Fourier called again this morning to ask if I'd be available to visit regularly if you decide to stay. When I said yes, he said 'Good,' and reminded me to be here about three o'clock, and hung up. So here I am." Charlie laughed. "I remember him being a man of few words, but had forgotten how few." They were in a medium-sized room with couch, several armchairs, table and magazine rack. Alex noticed an ashtray sitting on the table.

"They allow smoking here?"

"My wife was a smoker, remember?" said Charlie. "Less than a pack a day, but

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it's one of the reasons she liked it here. The clinic has two waiting rooms. One smoking, the other, not. This is still a private clinic so they can do pretty much what they want. All of the working area and the dining room are nonsmoking but patients can smoke in their rooms if they follow the rules."

"What rules?"

"Cigarette smokers have to keep their cigarettes at the nurses center and can draw them two at a time; cigar smokers, one at a time. Pipe smokers can keep their pipes in their room. There's rarely more than a half dozen smokers here at a time, and in any case, there's no smoking after 11 p.m. and before five in the morning. This is a small clinic with no more than 18 patients, all in private rooms, so it poses no problem."

"You seem to know a lot about what goes on here," said Alex.

"Yeah, I spent a lot of days and a few nights at this place when my wife was here. Got so I learned the ropes. The staff is great, but the food leaves a bit to be desired—at least for a meat and potatoes guy like myself."

The door opened and a tall, rather shaggy man in brown corduroy trousers and a tweed coat stepped in. He was a bit over six feet, dark hair and beard both going gray, and carried a large, bent billiard pipe in his left hand. He stretched out his hand to Alex.

"Hank Fourier."

"Alex Cahill."

He turned to Charlie and shook his hand. "Nice to see you, Charlie."

"Same here, doc."

"Have a seat, fellows." He walked over to the table, sat on the edge, pulled a box of wooden matches from his jacket pocket and lit his pipe.

What followed was an interview like Alex had never had before. Fourier was interested in his life history; where he was born, grew up, childhood illnesses, type of work Alex did before he retired, where he traveled for business or pleasure, and in particular, any illness in the last two years.

When Alex finished, Fourier said, "What are your eating and drinking habits? Diet, number of meals a day, and alcohol use?"

"I usually eat twice a day. Normal American diet, though I'm not particularly a meat and potatoes man like Charlie, here. I usually have a drink in the evening; bourbon or scotch, though I might have beer or wine with a meal."

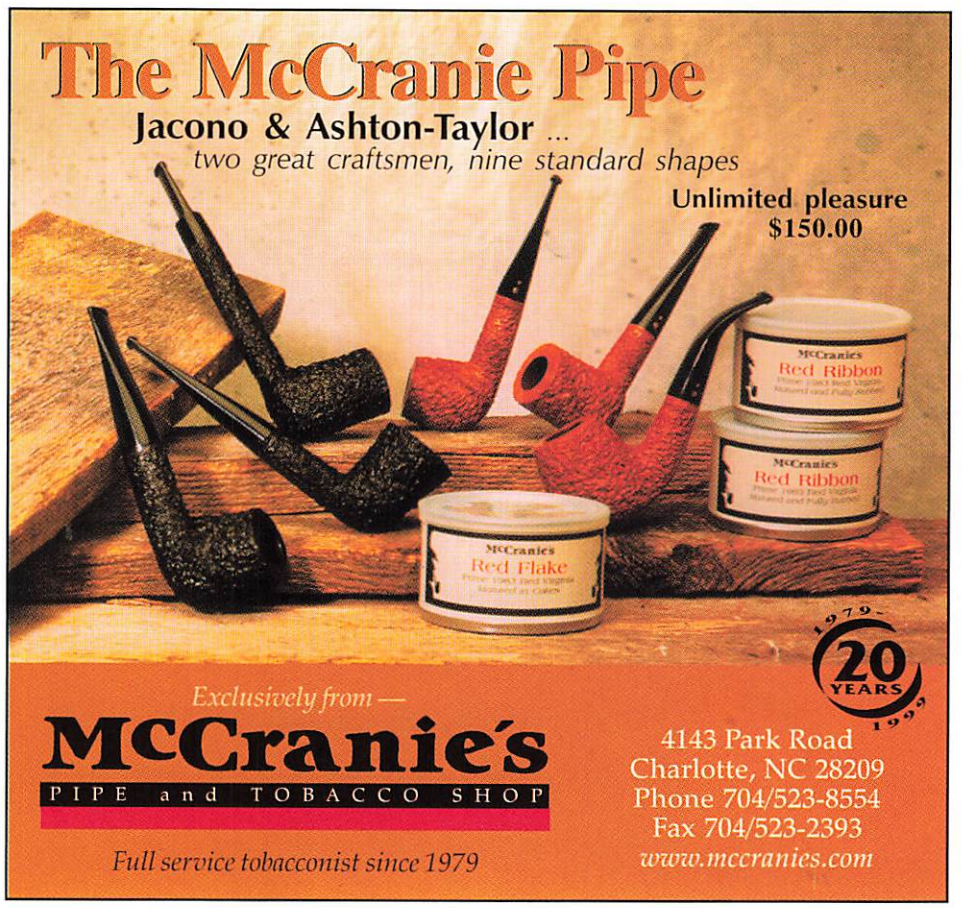
"OK. I have no reason to repeat the tests already given to you by the other doctors, but I've asked them to send me the results. Dr. Hamilton tells me your lymphoma appears to have originated in the groin and spread to other locations. Aggressive treatments involving surgery and chemo are sometimes successful, and considering your good physical condition I'm surprised he didn't press you further to follow that course."

"Must have been my tone of voice when I talked with him," said Alex. "Basically, I told him I had my mind made up that I wouldn't subject myself to totally debilitating treatments that could leave me dependent on outside care with little chance of recovering—all for gaining a couple of miserable years."

"Considering your active lifestyle, I'm not surprised," said Fourier. "If you choose to check in, you'll be here for two months. We have a very high regard for modern medicine but take a holistic approach to treating problems. We combine the two. You've ruled out invasive surgery, so I'll take a few minutes to talk about our approach here at the clinic. First of all, the fact that you're a long-term pipe smoker gives you an edge; perhaps a big one."

Alex registered surprise and started to say something when Fourier held up his hand and said, "Let me finish. We know tobacco users have significantly lower incident rates for certain types of cancer. For other types, they are significantly higher, of course. Some studies in England have shown longer life spans for pipe smokers than nonsmokers, though it's not proven as yet and may simply be the nature of the average pipe smoker. Cigarette smokers run a much higher risk of lung cancer than pipe smokers, but this may be due to any number of factors. And of course, pollutants in the air we breathe contribute to the problem for smokers and nonsmokers alike.

"We've known for years that smokers have an advantage over nonsmokers in terms of incidence rates and remission for certain types of cancer. At this stage, we don't know exactly why, but in a three-year study several years ago, we found a strong statistical correlation that couldn't be ignored. As a result, and in cooperation with several research facilities, we began taking part in a program where all of the participants are smokers. Through additional research, and analysis of the



control groups involved, an experimental drug regimen was developed, which, for reasons not yet fully understood, has given us a substantially greater success rate among smokers than non-smokers. If you choose to stay here, you—and your pipe—will be part of that program."

Alex took his pipe from his pocket, lit it, and said, "All right, when do we start?"

Fourier laughed, relit his own pipe, and said, "I must have said some things you were hoping to hear. Be here in three days. That's Monday. I'll make the arrangements. You'll have four meals a day and you might consider them unusual: high herbal content in addition to fruit, grain and vegetables. One glass of wine with your evening meal and our own special cocktail at bedtime. Lots of exercise. And Charlie will visit regularly to listen to your bitching, or anything else you want to talk about. Aside from daily critiques at the clinic, you need to be able to relieve stress, to open up on any topic to someone outside of clinic staff. That's Charlie's job."

The two months that followed were unlike any Alex had experienced before. There was a subtle regimen to every day. At first, the food tasted bland, and at the end of two weeks he found how important it was to have Charlie around to listen to him gripe about it. Charlie visited every other day, and each time before he left, he met with Dr. Fourier, who seemed to live at the clinic. They liked each other but Charlie called him "the bluntest S.O.B." he'd ever met, which was something Alex already knew.

By the end of the first month, Alex had lost seven pounds and felt better than he'd felt in years. And much to his surprise, he was beginning to enjoy the diet. His pipe smoking had dropped to four bowls a day instead of his usual six or seven, but they were pure pleasure instead of habit. Several times a week, he and the doctor would walk the grounds, smoking pipes and sometimes talking—sometimes not. As the end of two months approached, a feeling of unease settled over Alex. He felt safe at the clinic and fit, and had mixed feelings about leaving. Fourier told him it was common to feel that way and in fact, it would be unusual if he didn't. He went on to say the one thing crucial to successful remission would be Alex's determination to maintain the clinic lifestyle after he left. During his final week, they ran the same battery of tests that had been run before. Some results that had been positive before were now negative and some were the same. Most important to Alex were the words, "in remission."

On his last day at the clinic, Charlie came to pick him up. Fourier shook hands with both of them but presented Alex with a warning. "This isn't success, it's progress. We may have bought some time, maybe even a substantial amount of time." He looked at Charlie as he said it and smiled. Charlie just blinked. Tears, maybe. Alex couldn't tell. They said good-bye again and left for Charlie's place. Alex would stay for a few days.

Alex came into the living room carrying a small box about 10 inches square that he'd packed in his bag before leaving for the clinic. The room was warm and comfortable, with a fire crackling in the fireplace, a decanter of sherry on the coffee table, and the aroma of pipe tobacco heavy in air.

"Here ya go, Charlie," said Alex, with a smile. "Just my way of saying thank-you for being there when I needed you."

As Charlie took the box, he said with a laugh, "Too small to hold Scotch, unless it's a pint or two." He opened the box and removed four pipes; all Charatans and one of them the Coronation he'd admired and smoked the summer before.

"Hell, Alex, I can't take these."

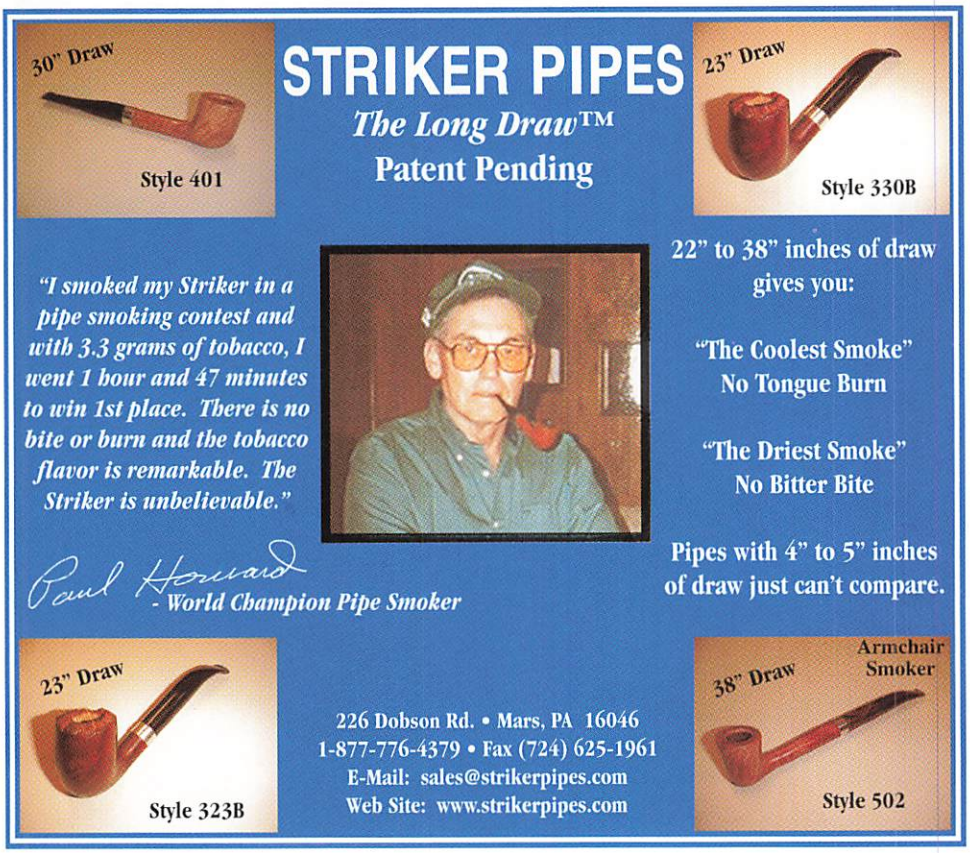
"Oh yes you can... and will. You'll get the others later on. Much later, if I have anything to say about it."

Charlie set the pipe he was smoking on the coffee table and reached for a humidor of rich English tobacco to fill the Coronation. "God love ya, Alex, I'm a happy man."

Alex said, "Me too, Charlie," and smiled at his friend.

Charlie lit the pipe, and the aroma, rich with the scent of Latakia, filled the room. "You know, Alex, three months ago you had one chance in 10, and I had no idea I would ever own this pipe." He paused... puffing gently... smiling. "Now, when do you want to go to Montana?" *P&T*

Regis McCafferty is co-founder, past president and current board member of the North American Society of Pipe Collectors. He has a degree in English, is a member of the Academy of American Poets, and has published numerous articles on pipes and pipe collecting, in addition to poetry and several short stories. His recent retirement provides time for freelance writing.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Father and Son Stamps

I understand that there are two pipemakers, father and son, named Chonowitsch. I have a pipe that has "Chonowitsch" stamped in a straight line on the shank. How do I know which carver made this pipe?

R.V. Winter
New York, New York

Jess Chonowitsch is a world-famous pipemaker whose pipes are among the highest quality available anywhere. They are quite expensive and avidly sought by many collectors. His father, Emil Chonowitsch, was a skilled maker with a reputation that has been somewhat overshadowed by the success of his son.

Jess reports that his pipes always have the name "Jess" stamped on them, purposely to differentiate his own pipes from his father's. Emil used "Chonowitsch" and "Hand Cut" in a straight line. Jess uses "Chonowitsch" and "Denmark" in a circle around "Jess."

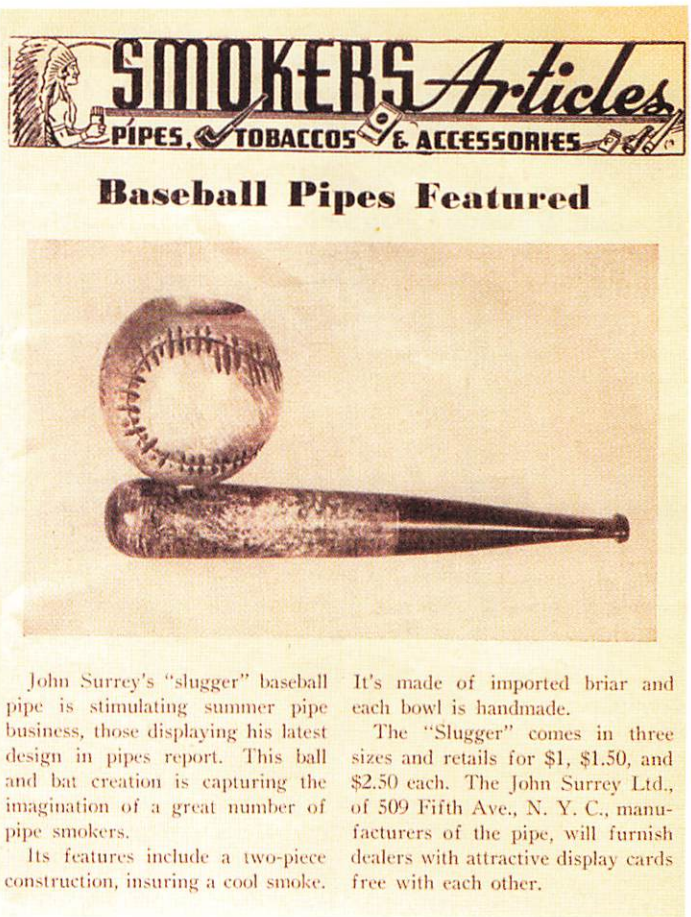
The only exception, Jess says, is on pipes having bamboo shanks, when there may not be room for the large circular stamp, or where it will risk cracking the bamboo from the pressure of stamping the pipe. Then he uses his father's straight Chonowitsch stamp, but still puts "Jess" and "Denmark" underneath it. Probably the only pipes that will be easy to confuse between the two, then, are bamboo-shanked pipes. However, if it does not say Jess on it, it was made by Emil Chonowitsch.

Baseball Pipe

I have an old briar pipe that has a baseball-shaped bowl, including stitching carved into the wood, and with a shank shaped like a baseball bat. Have you ever seen one of these? Can you tell me how old it may be?

Oscar Keenan
Toronto, Canada

A pipe such as yours was described in *Retail Tobacconist* magazine in its July 22, 1948, issue, and if it is the same pipe, that pretty well dates it for you. Here is the photo and description as published 52 years ago, and shown at right:


SMOKERS Articles
PIPES, TOBACCOS & ACCESSORIES
Baseball Pipes Featured
John Surrey's "slugger" baseball pipe is stimulating summer pipe business, those displaying his latest design in pipes report. This ball and bat creation is capturing the imagination of a great number of pipe smokers.
Its features include a two-piece construction, insuring a cool smoke. It's made of imported briar and each bowl is handmade.
The "Slugger" comes in three sizes and retails for $1, $1.50, and $2.50 each. The John Surrey Ltd., of 509 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C., manufacturers of the pipe, will furnish dealers with attractive display cards free with each other.

C.P.F. Pipe

I have recently purchased a hand-carved bulldog pipe with the brand mark "C.P.F." The initials C.P.F. are surrounded by an oval. Would this pipe be of the same make as the one mentioned in the Kaywoodie ad in your Summer 1999 issue on page 53? This page contains an ad from 1946 and mentions that the first of the family of Kaywoodie pipes in 1851 were known by the brand mark "C.P.F." Could this be one of the same family of pipes? Any info that you may have would be appreciated.

Chuck Peccolo
Terryville, Connecticut

The C.P.F. logo, which has been in existence since 1851, stands for Consolidated Pipe Factory, and is found stamped on briar pipes inside an oval, but is also seen accompanying meerschaum pipes made by the company, printed on the inside of the individual pipe cases. The logo was patented in 1883 by Kaufman Brothers & Bondi, which would later be assimilated or evolve into the Kaywoodie company. Bill Feuerbach of S.M. Frank Company (makers of Kaywoodie, Yello-Bole and Medico pipes), says he has run across store receipts for C.P.F. pipes dating from the late 1870s. The date the C.P.F. logo stopped being used is unknown, but Feuerbach estimates it was somewhere around 1910-1915. So your pipe is most likely anywhere from 85 to 120 years old, and conceivably up to 150 years old, though briar use was rare that far back. I can't confirm it, but one source says C.P.F. originated in Pennsylvania, so your pipe was made either in Pennsylvania or New York.

The Renaissance

I have a large Ser Jacopo Renaissance I am curious about. It has the number 616 stamped on one side of the shank, and on the other; "Made by Hand 23." Can you provide any information about this pipe?

Dr. Allen Siedle
St. Paul, Minnesota

Rob Siegel, U.S. distributor for Ser Jacopo, kindly provided the following information:

The Renaissance line was manufactured in the mid-1980s (really only in 1984 and 1985) and limited to U.S. distribution. All were oversized, large versions of eight or nine relatively classical shapes. The Renaissance is the only series that Ser Jacopo ever placed a date stamp on. Your pipe was made in 1985 (determined by adding the 2 and 3 in the number 23).

Renaissance pipes also represent the first shape-prescribed line from Ser Jacopo. The 616 on your pipe refers to the finish and shape. The first 6 indicates the finish (not sure which one the 6 is, but different numbers would

indicate smooth, sandblast, tanshell etc.) and the 16 indicates the shape.

It is possible that the Renaissance line of pipes may be resurrected at some point in the near future, though no specific and immediate plans have been made.

Blocked Tobacco Chamber

About two weeks ago my left thumb became stuck in the bowl of my pipe. At first I found this a novel occurrence, but it has now become more of an annoyance than anything else. Is there anything I can do?

Witzy
Cyberspace

Smoking that pipe will be difficult, obviously, since your thumb is blocking the flow of oxygen, making tobacco combustion impossible. So the thumb must come out. Obviously we do not wish to risk the pipe in any way, but thumbs are common and easily disposed of. Amputation is relatively simple, and many efficient tools for the purpose may be found in any home toolbox. However, if you are sensitive to infection, faint easily, or are perhaps just a bit clumsy (all thumbs, ha ha!) you may choose to have the thumb removed by a professional surgeon or cooperative neighbor. The important thing is to mask the pipe carefully, because tears and blood can stain the bowl, especially a meerschaum. You did not mention the type of pipe involved, but even briar is difficult to clean when body fluids get on the finish, and hemoglobin inside the bowl may require the inconvenience of prematurely reaming and cleaning the tobacco chamber. So be safe and mask the pipe with plastic and sturdy tape before surgery, being careful, of course, not to get any adhesive on the pipe itself. To further avoid harming the pipe, it is also imperative that you use a good table vise to clamp the *thumb*—NEVER the pipe bowl—during the sawing and/or hacking.

Post-operatively, the thumb will shrink rapidly, and you should be able to remove it without delay, remembering to twist it counter-clockwise, pulling with even pressure until it is extracted. If the thumbnail has scratched the carbon cake, sand the inside of the bowl to even consistency with 600 grit sandpaper wrapped around a wooden dowel of appropriate diameter. If you wait a couple of days, however, the thumb should shrink enough so it will drop out without any sort of coaxing on your part—probably a better strategy, because it does not risk flaking or chipping the cake under pressure. However, do not wait more than two days, as the briar may begin to absorb the aroma of the decomposing digit, and few tobacco blends are enhanced by this characteristic.

I do not recommend smoking the tobacco that has remained in the pipe during this time, except for cherry blends. Otherwise, refill with fresh tobacco before smoking.

As a side benefit, you might consider drying the thumb in hot desert sand for a few weeks to further shrink and mummify it, then have a silver or brass cap attached to the base, perhaps by a local jeweler, and thereby acquire a very nice tamper as a memento. Just be sure that it has sufficiently diminished in diameter—it is a difficult procedure to remove an oversized tamper that has become lodged in a pipe bowl.

Older Bang Nomenclature

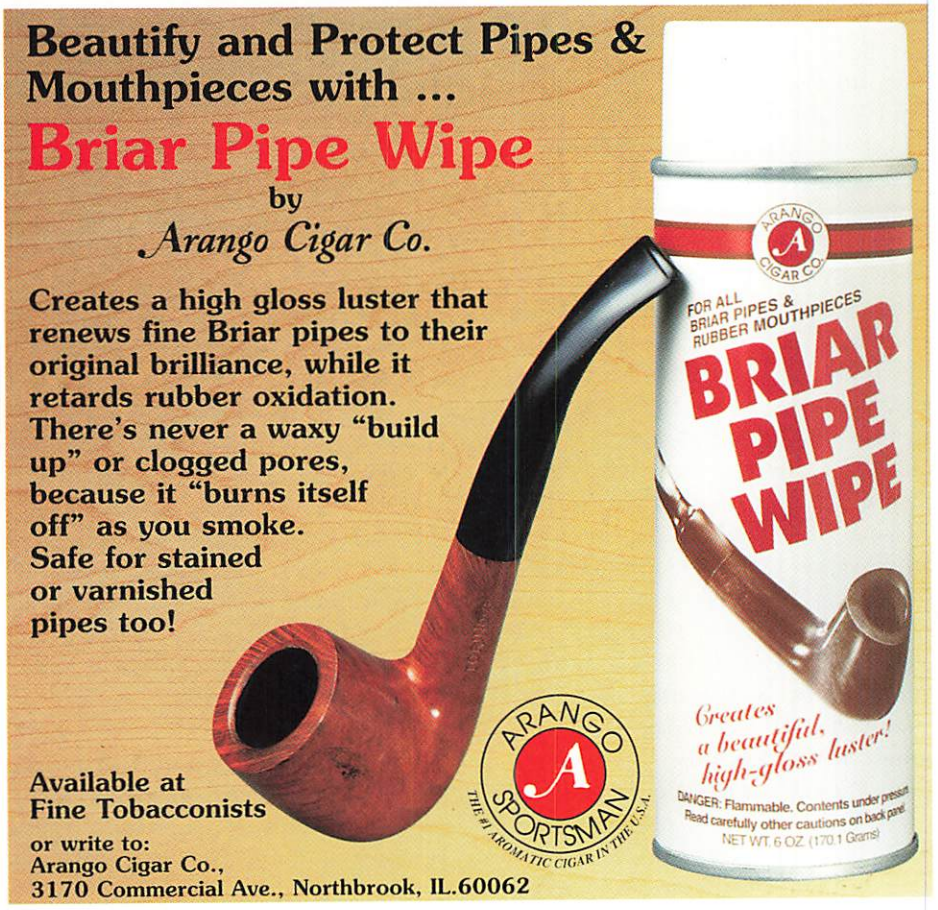
I just bought this pipe. I couldn't help myself; it's beautiful! It's a grade "B" Bang with the initials UN on it for Ulf Noltensmeier. What exactly is a grade "B"? Where does it stand in the old hierarchy of nomenclature?

Mike Penix
Cyberspace

S. Bang pipes are made, as you know, by Ulf Noltensmeier and Per Hansen in Copenhagen, Denmark. They are very high grade artisan pipes, as is easy to see in your photograph.

Personal stamps started in the early '80s, so your pipe with its Ulf Noltensmeier stamp is later than that. Early Bang pipes are graded in the following ascending order: Black blast, Tan blast, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, A, B, C, and very rarely you might find a D.

During the first seven years that Per and Ulf worked at S. Bang (that's 1970-77, although the brand started in 1968), there were also some extraordinarily rare high-grades with E, F and G stamps. However, your pipe represents a very respectable grade, and it is a beauty. Wanna sell it? *P&T*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The After Hours Pipe Club
Meetings are the first Monday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Vintage restaurant in the Gage shopping center. If you need more information call the fine staff at Churchill's, 785.273.0102, by e-mail, *afterhourspc@hotmail.com*, or visit *www.homestead.com/afterhourspc.*

Arrowhead Pipe Club
This club sponsors such events as the Michigan Regional Pipe Smoking Contest in Durand, Michigan. For further information, contact Dan Spaniola, Arrowhead Pipe Club, c/o Paul's Pipe Shop, 647 South Saginaw Street, Flint, MI 48502.

Atlanta Pipe Club
The Atlanta Pipe Club meets at 7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at Royal Cigar Company, 2179 Briarcliff Road, Atlanta, Georgia, on the corner of Briarcliff and La-Vista Rd. Call Joyce White at 404.329.0088 for additional information or directions.

The Briar-Root Brotherhood of Ontario
Meetings are held on the first Thursday of every month at The Dickens Pub, Elizabeth Street, Burlington, Ontario. For more information, contact Andrew Hicks at 905.333.4647 or e-mail *Dalgarnoj@home.com.*

Briar Squires Pipe Club
Formed in 1979, the club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Monday of each month at different locations in the Jacksonville, Florida, area. Annual pipe-smoking contests are held on the Sunday closest to Saint Patrick's Day. For further information, contact Briar Squires, P.O. Box 61446, Jacksonville, FL 32226, or Cy Jones at 904.739.8190.

Broad River Smoker's Conclave
The Broad River Smoker's Conclave meets on the second Thursday of each month. Meetings are held at Tobacco Road Smoke Shop in historic downtown Shelby, North Carolina. For information, contact Chris Tallent at 704.487.7868; e-mail *brsc@wncnet.com*; or see the club's Web site at *www.wncnet.com/smokeit.*

Capital Area Pipe Smokers (CAPS)
Based in Fairfax, Virginia, this is a long-established club with a solid membership of approximately 40 dedicated pipe smokers. The club hosts field trips to tobacco-related sites and frequently hosts guest speakers at its meetings. For meeting times and other information, contact David Silver at 888.834.7140.

Central Florida Pipe Club
The Central Florida Pipe Club meets on the last Thursday of each month at The Tobacco Merchant in the Jacobsen's Plaza in Longwood, Florida, from 6 to 9 p.m. For more information, contact Don Hockman Jr. at 407.647.3200 or e-mail *donhockmanjr@prodigy.net.*

Central Oklahoma Pipe Enthusiasts (COPE)
COPE meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Royal Bavaria Brauhaus & Restaurant, 3401 S. Sooner Road, Moore, Oklahoma. Times may change. For further information, contact COPE, P.O. Box 7034, Moore, OK 73153; or e-mail *jbaldeman@bix.com.*

Chesapeake Pipe Club
Informal meetings the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Champion Billiards, 1969 E. Joppa Road (next to Home Depot in the Perring Plaza), Towson, MD 21234. For further information, call Bill Maitz, 410.825.8940.

Chicago Pipe Collectors Club International Pipe and Cigar Show
April 28 and 29, 2001, with activities for early arrivals beginning on the 27th. Available activities include a cigar dinner, a silent auction, pre-show trading and a variety of guest speakers. The show will change hotels for 2001, and be held at the Indian Lakes Resort, 250 W. Shick Road, Bloomingdal, IL, which is closer to O'Hare Airport than previous shows. Reservations may be obtained by calling the resort at 630.529.0200 (mention the show for a special rate). For additional information, contact Mike Reschke at 630.889.0453 or e-mail *msreschke@ttinational.net*; or Frank Burla at 630.271.1317 or e-mail *FPBurla@aol.com.*

Christopher Morley Pipe Club of Philadelphia
The Christopher Morley Club meets the third Wednesday of every month at Chris' Jazz Cafe, 1421 Sansom Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at 7 p.m. For further information, call Bob Page at 215.567.2972.

C.O.R.P.S. Pipe Smoker's Exposition
The Conclave of Richmond Pipe Smokers presents the 16th Annual Pipe Smoker's Exposition and Celebration on Oct. 6 through Oct. 8, 2000 at the Holiday Inn Select, Koger South Conference Center, 10800 Midlothian Turnpike, Richmond, Va. For room reservations, contact the Holiday Inn at 804.379.3800 and mention the CORPS for special room rates. For additional information on the exposition or the reserve tables, call 804.342.0761, e-mail *conclave@corpipesmokers.org* or visit *www.corpipesmokers.org.*

Confrere of Indiana Briar Friars
For specific information on meeting times and places, contact Stephen Williams at 765.282.0229.

Dallas/Fort Worth Pipe Smokers Club
This club meets at 7:30 p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month at the Londoner Tavern, 4291 Belt Line Road, Addison, Texas. Contact Ed Price, *epr065@airmail.net.*

Fresno Pipe Club
The Fresno Pipe Club meets on the third Sunday of each month at 6 p.m. at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Fresno, California. For more information, contact Douglas A. Pitts at Hardwick's Briar Shoppe, Manchester Center, 3402 N. Blackstone, Suite 124, Fresno, CA 93726; telephone 209.228.1389; or e-mail *dpitts@gte.net.*

Gateway Area Pipe Show and Swap
Feb. 3, 2001 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Hilton St. Louis Airport Hotel, 10330 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, MO 63134, telephone 314.426.5500 or 800.345.5500. For additional information contact Bob Callaway, 220 Pralle Ln., St. Charles, MO 63303, telephone 636.946.8555.

Goodfellows Pipe Club
If you live in Hawaii, or are just vacationing there, Goodfellows Pipe Club invites you to attend its meetings, held the second Thursday of each month from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Cigar Emporium, Pearl Kai Shopping Center, 98-199 Kamehameha Highway, Suite A-9, Aiea, HI 96701. For further information, contact Dale James Neff at 808.484.5757, or fax 808.484.5755.

Greater Kansas City Pipe Club Show
The Kansas City club's show will be held on Nov. 4 and 5, 2000, at the Holiday Inn KCI, 11832 Plaza Circle, Kansas City, MO 64153, telephone 816.464.2345. Raffles, awards, more than 65 exhibit tables and a Pipe Dinner are on the agenda for the show. Tables cost $70 and admission is free. For additional information contact Michael R. Sull, 913.362.7864 (day), 913.341.7579 (evenings), or e-mail *michael@spencerian.com*.

Hudson Valley (N.Y.) Pipe Club
Formed in 1997, the Hudson Valley Pipe Club meets the second Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. Because the meetings take place at a number of different restaurants in the mid-Hudson Valley, contact one of the following people for location and further information: Al DiFalco, 914.756.2574; Rob Denholtz, 914.462.0751 or *den@ulster.net*; Steve Abrams, 914.679.8430 or *snabra@aol.com*.

Memphis Area Pipe Smokers (MAPS)
Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at Bravo Ristorante (in the basement of the Adam's Mark Hotel at Poplar and I-240. For additional information, call or e-mail Tom, 901.678.6824, *info@pipeclub.org* or visit the club's Web page at *www.pipeclub.org*.

Milwaukee Area Pipe Society
The Milwaukee Area Pipe Society meets at 7 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month at Jack's Tobacco and M.C.S., 13640-A W. Capitol Drive, Brookfield, Wisconsin. For information, contact Joe Harb at Jack's, 262.783.7473, or visit their Web site at *www.execpc.com/~perique*.

Mt. Town Society of Kapnismologists
Meetings are held the first and third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Smokers Club, 100 S. Mission Street, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan 48858. For additional information, contact Kat Gartner at 517.775.8536, or e-mail *gart@sensible-net*.

Murfreesboro Pipe and Tobacco Club
Meetings are held the second Monday of each month in the banquet room at Puffing Billy's Restaurant on Broad Street in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, starting at 6:30 p.m. and usually lasting 90 minutes to 2 hours. Bring your pipes, your favorite blends, and enjoy good fellowship, a great meal, and a fine smoke during the meeting.

Nashville Pipe Show
The Nashville Association of Pipe Smokers presents the Nashville Pipe Show, Oct. 14, 2000 at the Radisson at Opryland (same location as last year but the hotel has changed names) from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m. For table reservations contact Todd Smith, show organizer, at 888.292.9576 or fax 615.263.2824. for room reservations, call 615.889.0800 and ask for the Pipe Show rate.

North American Society of Pipe Collectors
With more than 700 members worldwide, NASPC will be hosting its 2000 pipe show from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 26, 2000, at Holiday Inn on the Lane, 328 West Lane Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201, telephone 614.294.4848. For more information, contact Bill Unger at P.O. Box 9642, Columbus, OH 43209-9642; phone 614.252.2904; or visit the club's Web site at *www.naspc.org*. And don't forget to join the NASPC. Only $12 per year, and you receive a subscription to one of the largest, most informative pipe newsletters available.

North Oakland Tobacco and Pipe Club
The North Oakland Tobacco and Pipe Club (NOT PC) is a Detroit club that meets at 7 p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in the upstairs lounge of The Berkley Front, 3087 W. 12 Mile, between Coolidge and Greenfield in downtown Berkley. For further information, contact Terry McGinty at 248.471.0195 or Michael Lindner at 248.844.8209 or at *sasieni@pobox.com*.

Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers
The Pipe Puffers meet on the second Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. at the Tobacco Plus Store in the Midway Plaza in Highland, Arkansas. For more information, contact Dick Alexander, Northeast Arkansas Pipe Puffers, 32 Alma Lane, Hardy, AR 72542-9487, call 870.856.4100 or 870.856.4433, e-mail *dalexander@arkansastobaccoplus.com* or visit *www.arkansastobaccoplus.com*.

Tucson, Arizona Pipe Show
The Old Pueblo Pipe Club of Tucson, Arizona will hold its first pipe show from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 23, 2001 at the Best Western Inn, Tucson Catalina Foothills, 6201 N. Oracle Road, Tucson, Arizona 85704. Call the hotel for reservations at 888.788.2766. For further information, contact Jack Tompkins 520.459.4317, *tompkins@primenet.com*, or check the club Web page at *shadow.zedcor.com/bigjack/Pipes/OPPC*.

Sacramento Pipe Collector's Assembly (SPCA)
Meets monthly, usually on the third Thursday at 6 p.m. Informal meetings take place in downtown Sacramento, 1325 O Street #1, California. For more information and to confirm meeting times, contact Gary Malmberg, 916.442.6027 or 916.929.8965.

St. Louis Pipe Club
Meetings are on the second Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. at John Dengler Tobacconist, 700 S. Main, St. Charles, Missouri; and the fourth Saturday of each month at 7 p.m. at Town & Country Tobacco, 13933 Manchester Rd., St. Louis, Missouri. For further information on the club or on the Gateway Area Pipe Show held each February, contact Jay Milton at 618.656.7584, or Bob Calloway at 314.946.8555.

Sherlock Holmes Pipe Club
Meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Holiday Inn, Mansfield, Massachusetts. For further information, contact Steve Smith, *fourdots@ma.ultranet.com*, or Don Powers at 781.449.0380.

South Florida Briar Brotherhood
The South Florida Briar Brotherhood meets the third Thursday of each month at the London Pub Too in Margate, Florida. The club sponsors an annual 60-table pipe show, The Southern Pipe Expo. The next show is Jan. 6, 2001. For more information on the club or show, contact Grant Porter 954.741.8595 or see the club's Web site at *www.se.mediaone.net/~pipesman*.

South Jersey Pipe and Cigar Club
Meetings are scheduled for the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at Your Cigar Box, 703 Tilton Road, Northfield, NJ 08225. For additional information, call 609.645.3345.

Toronto Pipe Club
Meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month from 2 p.m. until it is decided to leave, usually 4 or 5 p.m. Contact Ian Belton for the location and any other details at 905.857.6108, fax 905.857.8863 or *ibelton@inforamp.net*.

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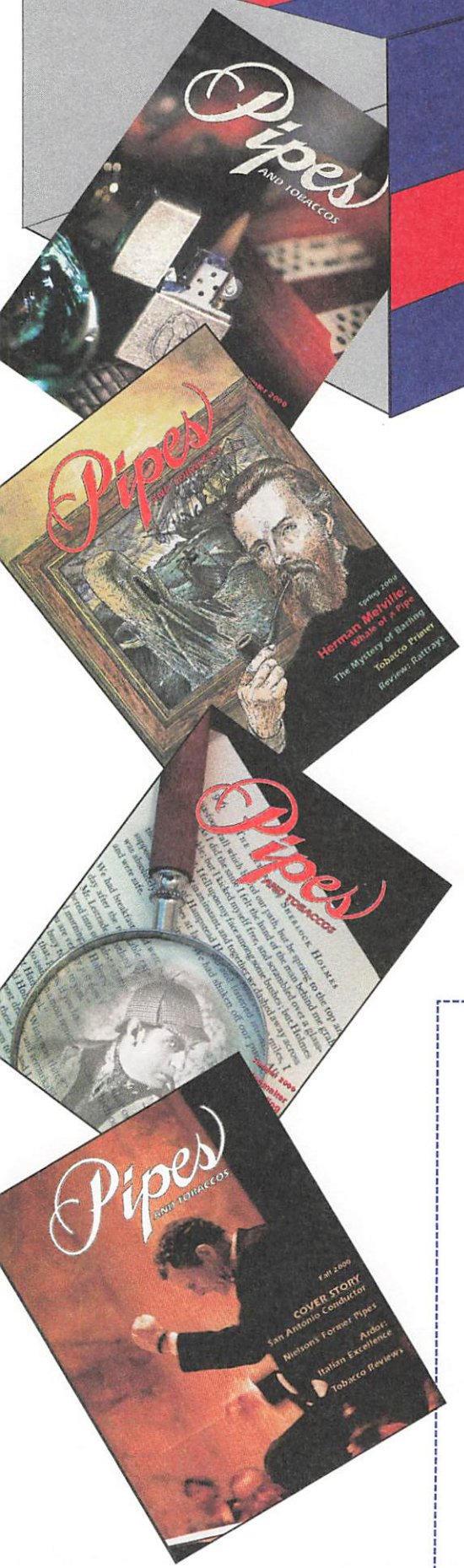

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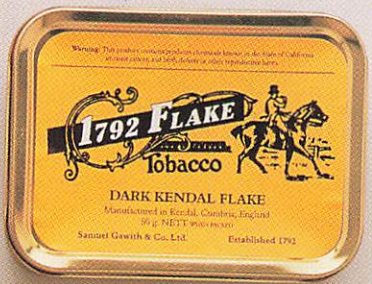

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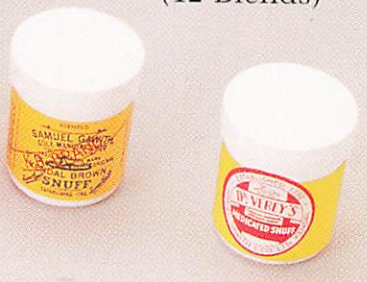

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